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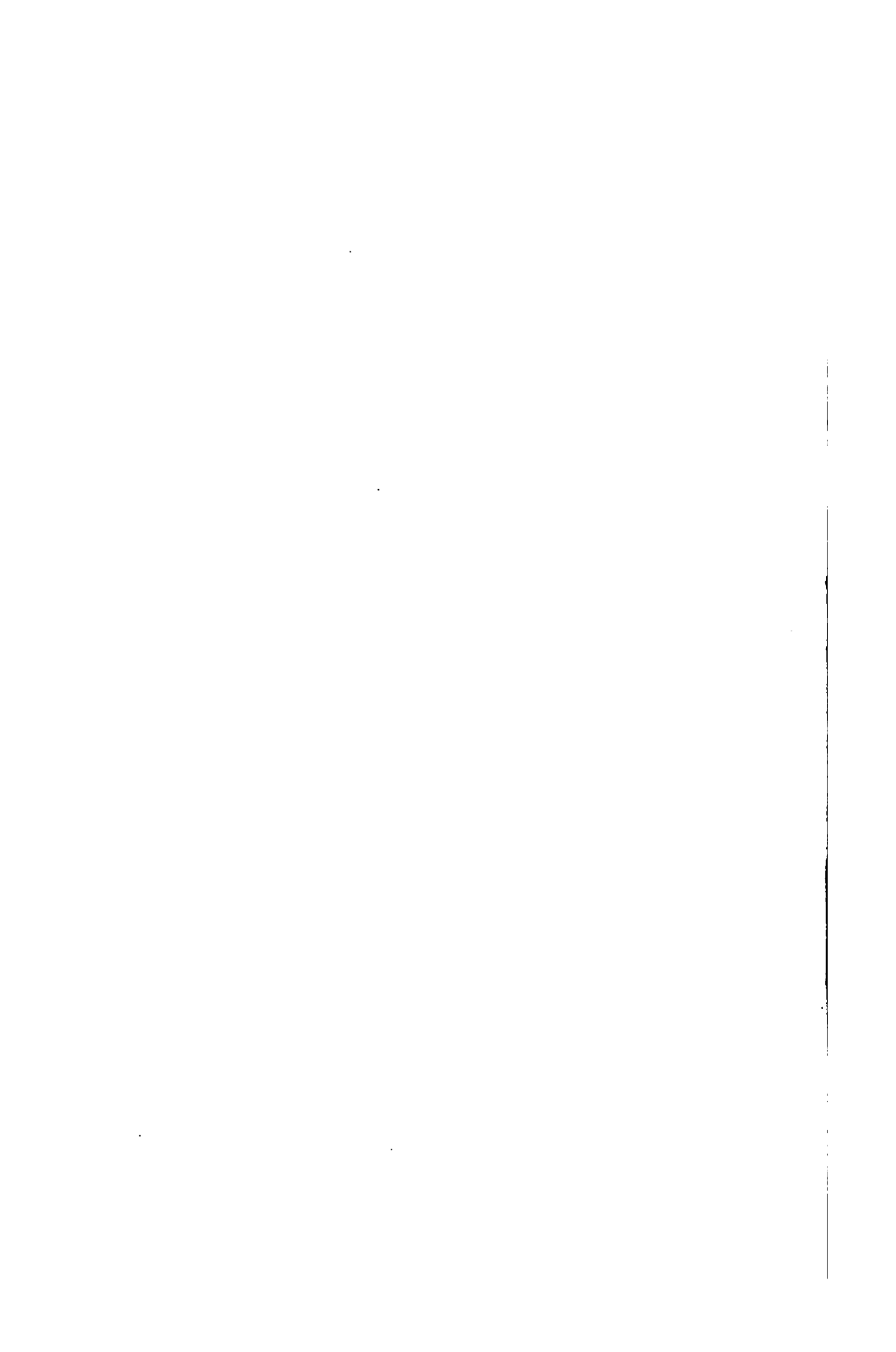
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ALTARS PROHIBITED

BY

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

PART II.

BY

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LONDON:

J. HATCHARD AND SON, 187, PICCADILLY.

1844.

1747.

1747.

LONDON :
G. J. PALMER, PRINTER, SAVOY STREET, STRAND.

“ALTARS PROHIBITED,” &c.

PART II.

In reply to the authorities given in the preceding pages in proof of altars being prohibited by the Church of England, it has been alleged, that there is a rubric in our Prayer-book which sanctions them. The rubric is, “And here is to be noted, that such ornaments of the Church and of the ministers thereof, at all times of their ministration, shall be retained, and be in use, as were in this Church of England, by the authority of Parliament, in the second year of the reign of King Edward the Sixth;” the corresponding rubric in the preceding Prayer-books from the year 1559 being, “And here is to be noted that the minister at the time of the Communion, and at all other times in his ministration, shall use such ornaments in the church, as were in use by authority of Parliament, in the second year of the reign of King Edward the Sixth, according to the Act of Parliament set in the beginning of this book.”

It is contended, that in the words “ornaments of the church,” are included the altars which were in use in the second year of Edward VI.

The argument is hardly worth an answer, for who would seriously contend for such an application of the word “ornaments,” but with the view of gaining some

object by it? But its unsoundness may easily be proved. For, in the first place, have we any reason to suppose, that those who inserted the words in the Liturgy of 1662, affixed such a meaning to them? Did they re-introduce altars, or as far as we can ascertain, desire to do so? The rubric, be it observed, is not merely *permissive*, but *preceptive*, and therefore if, as is alleged, they introduced these words *de novo* in *this sense*, there would have been some indication of it in their acts. But, on the contrary, there was none.

Secondly, it appears from Bishop Ridley's "Injunctions" and "Reasons," (see pp. 7, 34—6, above), that even in the second year of Edward VI. altars were not "in use by authority of Parliament" as distinguished from tables, but that while the Liturgy and Act for Uniformity of that year were still in force, Bishop Ridley gave directions for the substitution of tables for altars throughout his diocese, which were followed up by an order of council to the same effect for the whole kingdom; "which thing," as the divines justly remark, who addressed Queen Elizabeth on this subject (as stated above, pp. 36 *et seq.*), "they would not have done, if altars had been established by authority of the said Parliament." (p. 40, above.)

Lastly, the matter is put beyond question by the following facts: The rubric, though somewhat different from the rubric of the Elizabethan Prayer-book, precisely corresponds with the direction of the Act for Uniformity of Queen Elizabeth, which runs thus,—“Provided always, and be it enacted, that such ornaments of the church and of the ministers thereof, shall be retained and be in use, as was in this Church of England, by authority of Parliament, in the second year of the reign of King Edward the Sixth, until other order shall be therein taken by the authority of the

Queen's Majesty, with the advice of her Commissioners, &c." (Gibson's Codex, i. 271.) Now the Prayer-book required to be used by this Act is, the second book of Edward VI., in which the word "altar" had been changed into "table." And when the Queen was addressed shortly after by the leading divines of the Reformation, exhorting her not to sanction the altars that had been re-erected in the reign of Queen Mary, they intimate to her, that to allow altars would be to "break ecclesiastical laws, established by Parliament," "seeing there be special words in the Book of Service allowed by Parliament, and having force of a law, for the placing and using of a table at the ministration of the communion, which special words cannot be taken away by general terms." (See p. 39 above.) Accordingly, in the Queen's Injunctions, issued soon after, the fact is distinctly recognised that "the law" prohibits altars.

But if the direction that the ornaments of the church were to be the same as were in the second year of the reign of King Edward VI., referred to the altars, so far from altars being prohibited, they would have been required by the law, and therefore such was not the meaning of the words, nor consequently of our rubric, which is exactly the same.

And hence we obtain a full and complete answer to another futile argument in favour of "altars," from the direction of the rubric, that "the chancels shall remain as they have done in times past." For this direction in precisely the same words, was in the first Prayer-book of Elizabeth, that very book to which the divines that addressed her at the beginning of her reign, appeal as requiring a table and prohibiting an altar for the administration of the holy communion ; and, moreover,

is to be found in the second Prayer-book of Edward VI., when the altars had been removed.

The question as to what constitutes a *table* and what an *altar*, is merely the question of one who wishes to obscure the subject. When God commanded Moses to make an *altar* and a *table* for the Tabernacle, amidst all the particular directions given as to the *materials*, &c., to be used, it was not thought necessary to give any instructions as to the difference of form between the two. "Thou shalt make," it is said, "a table of shittim wood, &c., and thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, &c., and thou shalt make for it four rings of gold, and put the rings in the four corners that are *on the four feet thereof*." (Exod. xxv. 23—26.) Taking for granted that it was understood to be a horizontal plane standing upon feet as its supporters. And similar directions are given respecting the *altar*, its form being supposed to be well understood. (See Exod. xxvii. 1—8, and xxx. 1—4.) And we may observe, that this was not less an altar for not being cemented to the foundation on which it stood, or the building in which it was placed, for in the Tabernacle it was not thus fixed, but had rings in it for staves, by which when the Israelites were on their journey it was carried. Whatever, then, might be the reason for the distinction between the two, there was a difference in their form by which the one was distinguishable from the other. They were two different things, intended for different purposes. The table was a horizontal plane, resting upon a frame to which it was attached, supported by feet, and unattached to the building in which it was placed. The altar was an erection from the ground, not necessarily fixed to the ground, but formed as if it were built from the ground.

The distinction may evidently be traced back to the earliest age, when the very phrase used of *building* an altar unto the Lord shows the general character of its form, and that it was different to what a table would be. Nor would the two ever have been confounded together, nor in fact were they, but from the rise of Romish false doctrine. There are still in existence some of the tables in use during the earliest period of the Christian Church, but these are called and *used* as *altars* by the Romanists, *consistency with their present doctrines requiring them to do so*. Consequently, as far as *names* are concerned, it would be difficult to draw a precise distinction between the two. But is this confusion, so easily to be accounted for, to be perpetuated by us? Are we to determine that two things really distinct from each other are identical, because Romanists and Tractarians find it convenient for their purposes at times to call each by the name of the other. When forced by the regulations of our church to make use of a *table*, they call it an *altar* before the people, to introduce the doctrine of a sacrifice; and when having contrived to smuggle an altar into one of our churches, they are called to account for it in an ecclesiastical court, they stand out that their altar is nothing but a table. The consciousness of some parties who are very active in this matter at the present time of the difference between the two, is shown in the following passage. "With respect to the latter," i. e., altars, say the Camden Society, "we say, if circumstances do not permit you to have a fixed altar of stone, do not attempt one of wood, but let your altar be a moveable table."* They prefer a fixed altar of stone, but if that cannot be obtained they recommend not an *altar of wood*, but a *table*, showing that they regard an altar of wood and a

* Ecclesiol. iii. 6.

table as things altogether different, though they may choose, where they can get nothing more to their mind than a table, to *call* that table an altar.

Thus, if Romanists or Tractarians are compelled to make use of a table, they call it an altar, from the purposes to which it is applied. But this does not show that there is no difference between the *proper* forms of an altar and a table. So if a Protestant was obliged to use an altar, he would call it a communion-table, from the purposes to which he applied it, but this would not take from it its character of an altar in strictness of speech, nor remove the objections to its use from the probability of its misleading the minds of the people, still less make it *consistent with the requisitions of our church*.

No doubt where there is an object to accomplish in mystifying the minds of men upon the subject, a thing can be made so partaking of the character both of a table and an altar, that it shall be difficult to know what to call it. And the matter may well be commended to the vigilant attention of our ecclesiastical authorities. The case, however, which is now *sub judice* in our ecclesiastical courts, is one in which there can be no doubt of this kind. The altar which has been erected at the Round Church, Cambridge, is a mass of stone work, rising as an erection from the ground, and attached to the fabric of the church. The only point in which it differs from the tomb-like altars generally seen in the Romish churches, is that it is not closed in front, (though it is on the sides,) the Romish altars being generally closed all round, the interior being devoted to the reception of relics, without which there is a very general feeling among Romanists,* that the eucharist cannot be properly cele-

* I use these words because Romish writers differ as to the *necessity* of

brated upon them. But this tomb-like form is not reckoned essential to the being of an altar;* and occasionally, I believe, a portion of the front is left open, that the relics may be seen, and protected only by a trellis work of brass or other metal.

I will now subjoin one or two additional proofs of altars having been removed from our churches by authority.

The first relates to the diocese of Worcester, during the episcopate of Edw. Sandys, afterwards Archbishop of York, in 1560: and proves not merely the removal of the altars, but the care with which the destruction of the altar-stone was attended to. It appears that at the first visitation of his diocese shortly after his appointment in December, 1559, he found in one of his parishes, in which Sir John Bourne, a zealous Roman Catholic, was a resident, that the altar-stone still remained in the church unbroken, upon which he gave orders that it should be broken, but Sir John contrived to have it conveyed out of the church and secreted, as it was said, in his own house to prevent its destruction. Upon a subsequent disagreement between Sir J. Bourne and the Bishop, which led to an appeal to the Privy Council, this matter among others came before them. The statements of the Bishop on the subject are as follow, and strongly show how carefully the

having relics inclosed in them. See Alph. de Ligorio, *Theologia Moralis*, lib. vi. tract 3, sec. 369.

* See Voight *Thysiaasteriolog.* p. 120. It is supposed by many that the tomb-like form in which altars have been made was derived from the early usage of celebrating the eucharist on the tombs of the martyrs, which were places very commonly used by the early church for their assemblies during the ages of persecution. It might be so, but still the form is so similar to that of the Jewish altar, that I should be more inclined to think that the form of the tomb was rather derived from that of the altar, and that such tombs were not introduced till altars began to be erected in honour of, or over the graves or bones of, martyrs

directions respecting the removal of the monuments of superstition were carried out:—"And whereas I commanded an altar-stone in his church to be broken, according to the Queen's Majesty's Injunctions; and resorting thither to preach, I asked the churchwardens whether they had so done or no, they answered, that Sir John's men had carried it away into his house," &c. "The altar-stone remaining in the church, I commanded to be broken. At my coming thither [i. e. afterwards "to preach"] it was removed out of the church, but not broken."*

Again, in the Injunctions of Parkhurst, Bishop of Norwich, to his diocese, in 1561, we have among the Interrogatories, the following:—"Whether all *altars*, images, holy water stones, pictures, paintings be defaced, and removed out of the church and other places, and are destroyed, and the places where such impiety was so made up, as if there had been no such thing there." It is very similar to that which is given in p. 14 above, from Strype, cited by him from what he calls "Inquiries of some ordinary at his visitation." There is a slight verbal difference, however, at the end showing that the documents are not identical.†

Another interrogatory annexed to these Injunctions is, "Whether they have a fit and decent table to minister the communion on." And among the Injunctions we find the following:—"Item that they

* Strype's Annals of the Reformation, vol. i., c. 35, pp. 390, 397.

† The title of this peculiarly rare tract containing Parkhurst's Injunctions, is as follows:—"Injunctions exhibited by John by God's sufferance Bishop of Norwich, in his first visitation, beginning the 2nd day of May in the 3rd year of our Sovereign Lady Elizabeth," &c. London: by John Day. 4to. I quote from the original, in my possession.

[i. e. "every parson, vicar, and curate,"] *neither suffer the Lord's table to be hanged and decked like an altar, neither use any gestures of the popish mass in the time of ministration of the communion, as shifting of the book, washing, breathing, crossing, or such like."*

The order issued by the Commissioners, Oct. 10, 1561, cited p. 15 above, stands more fully thus,—“Also that the steps which be as yet at this day remaining in any cathedral, collegiate, or parish church, be not stirred nor altered: but be suffered to continue, with the tombs of any noble or worshipful personage, where it so chanceth to be, as well in chancel, church, or chapel. And if in any chancel the steps be transposed, that they be not erected again, but that the place be decently paved, where *the communion-table* shall stand out of the times of receiving the communion, having thereon a fair linen cloth, with some covering of silk, buckram, or other such like, for the clean keeping of the said cloth on *the communion BOARD*, at the cost of the parish. And further, that there be fixed upon the wall, over the said *communion BOARD*, the tables of God's precepts imprinted for the said purpose.”*

And thus does another Romanist, in addition to those we have already quoted, namely, John Rastell, in his reply to Jewell, bear witness to the destruction of altars in the English Church at the Reformation:—

* I give this from the original tract, in my possession, entitled, “Orders taken the x. day of October, in the third year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Elizabeth, &c. By virtue of her Majesty's letters, addressed to her highness' Commissioners for causes ecclesiastical.” The colophon states that it was printed by R. Jugge, the Queen's Printer, “cum privilegio Reg. Majest.” It consists of only two leaves 4to. These orders are quoted by Heylin, (*Hist. of the Reform.* sub a. 1561,) but have escaped the notice of Wilkins, Sparrow, and Dr. Cardwell, probably from the excessive rarity of the tract, of which I am not aware of any other copy, except one which has been lately found in the Bodleian Library.

"In the primitive church," he says, "altars were allowed among Christians, upon which they offered the unbloody sacrifice of Christ his body. Saint Paul manifestly saying, we have an altar, of which they may not eat, which communicate with idols. The council also, called Agathense, hath decreed it, that altars should be hallowed, not only with the anointing of holy oil, but also the blessing of the priest. *Yet your company (M. Juel) to declare what followers you are of antiquity, do account it among one of the kinds of idolatry, if one keep an altar standing.* And indeed you follow a certain antiquity, not yet of the Catholics, but of desperate heretics; as Optatus writeth against the Donatists, saying, What is so wicked and thievish, as to break, to rase, to remove the altars of God, upon which you once did offer? Now if you be of no affinity with the Donatists, answer, *for the pulling down of altars, what spirit it was which moved you thereunto.*"*

And lastly, so well established is the fact that the Reformers substituted wooden tables for the stone altars, that it is stated by Staveley in his History of Churches in England, as a matter beyond dispute. Speaking of the communion-table he says,—"*This, in the primitive, and in the late reforming times, was and is a table made and framed of wood; whereat Christians are to eat and drink, as best suiting to the true notion of the Lord's Supper. In the middle corrupted times it was generally made of stone, as more corresponding with the import of an altar, whereon the sacrifice of the mass was and still is offered up in the Roman Church.*"†

SINCE the above was in type, circumstances have induced me to add the following remarks. To pro-

* Confutation of Jewell's Sermon. Antw. 21st Nov. 1564, p. 33, 34.

† Staveley's History of Churches in England, 2nd edition, 1773, p. 207.

nounce upon the law of the case, I leave in the hands of those to whom that office is committed. But I may be permitted here, for the information of the unlearned reader, and to prevent his being mystified by the cloud with which this subject has been enveloped, to give a brief *summary* of the *legal argument* we derive from the authorities and historical documents given in the preceding pages for our conclusion that altars are prohibited in the Church of England.

The grounds, then, for this conclusion are twofold.

First; The rubric of the Book of Common Prayer and the 82nd of the Canons of 1604.

Second; The orders issued by, or under the authority of, the Crown in conformity with the powers and privileges granted to it, or acknowledged to belong to it, by Parliament.

First; The rubric of the Book of Common Prayer and the 82nd of the Canons of 1604.

The rubric, then, directs that "the *table* at the communion time having a fair white linen cloth upon it, shall stand in the body of the church, or in the chancel," &c., that after the sermon the priest shall "return to the Lord's *table*," and "place upon *the table*" the bread and wine, and so on; the word "table" being used constantly throughout the service, and everywhere in the description of that article of church furniture throughout the Prayer-book. The question to be determined is,—In what sense is this word used, and is it to be understood as excluding stone altars? Have we, then, any evidence that this word was intended to be understood *literally and exclusively*? The reply is, that we have evidence to this effect of the strongest kind, given in the passages to be found in the preceding pages. We there find that in the first Prayer-book of Edward VI., at a time when

many of the Romish altars remained, the word "altar" frequently occurred; that shortly after the issuing of that book all the "*altars*" throughout the kingdom were removed by authority, and "*tables*" placed in their room; and that when the second Prayer-book of Edward VI. was published, as the "*altars*" had been removed and "*tables*" placed in their stead, so here the word "altar" was everywhere removed, and "table" substituted for it; and that in the first year of Queen Elizabeth, the *second* Prayer-book of Edward VI. was revived *by Act of Parliament*, and (with some alterations having no connexion with our present subject) has continued to this day. We find that upon some suspicion of Queen Elizabeth's favouring altars, the principal divines of the period addressed her shortly after her coming to the throne in the following terms:—"Whereas her Majesty hath hitherto declared herself very loth to *break ecclesiastical laws established by Parliament*, till they were repealed by like authority, it will be much mused at, if any commandment should come forth now for the re-edification of *altars*, seeing there be SPECIAL WORDS in the *Book of Service allowed by Parliament, and having force of a law, for the placing and using of a TABLE at the ministration of the communion, which special words cannot be taken away by general terms.*"* We have also in the "Injunctions" of Queen Elizabeth, a distinct, however unwilling, *acknowledgment* that the removal of *altars* and placing of *tables* for the administration of the Holy Sacrament is "*according to the form of the law therefore provided,*" (the Act for Uniformity, i. e. the *rubric* as authorised by it,) and is "*the law in that behalf,*" i. e. for uniformity:† We find lastly, upon historical evidence peculiarly strong, that altars were removed and wooden

* See p. 39, above.

† See pp. 11, 12, above.

tables substituted for them throughout the kingdom ; and that one of the principal interrogatories in the Visitation Articles of the bishops during the reign of Elizabeth was, whether this had been properly and fully done, and that in the controversial works of that period between the leading divines of our Church and the Romanists, the destruction of *altars* and substitution of *wooden tables* for them was an *admitted fact*, with which the Romanists reproached the Protestants, and which the Protestants defended and gloried in having done.

When therefore it is asked, Where do we find any direction issued by authority subsequent to the accession of Queen Elizabeth, for ministering the communion at a table *and not at an altar* (for this is the fair and honest way of putting the question), we point at once to the "special words in the Book of Service allowed by Parliament, and having force of a law, for the placing and using of a *table* at the ministration of the communion," inserted for the express purpose of *excluding altars*. The facts of the case show in the strongest possible way that the word *table* was intended to be understood *literally* and *exclusively*, in the ordinary sense of the word, to the *particular* exclusion of *altars*.

Further ; we have the express injunction of the 82nd canon, that there shall be "a decent communion table in every church," which is to stand in a certain place, "*saving* when the holy communion is to be administered, *at which time* the same shall be placed in so good sort within the church or chancel as thereby the minister may be more conveniently heard," &c. He who denies that this contemplates and requires a *moveable table*, in the ordinary sense of the words, is not worth reasoning with.

And the only argument that has been brought against this conclusion is, that in certain cases the *table* has been directed to stand in a particular place. Now without entering upon the question of the validity and legality of the orders thus given, it is obvious that such a direction is no authority for erecting in a particular part of the church an *immoveable* structure in the place of the *moveable* table required by the canon. All that it could do would be to prevent, *in those particular cases*, the authorities of the parish from using the liberty given them by the canon to move the *table*, at the time of administering the communion, to what they might think a more convenient part of the church; it could not justify the erection of a structure of a different kind to that contemplated in the canon, and especially of a kind that has been expressly excluded and carefully removed. Nay more, any such order affects only the particular case for which it is given. Granting that a particular place and no other has been assigned by legal authority to the communion table in certain churches, this affects only the individual cases so decided upon. All others rest upon the general rules given by the rubric and canon.

If it shall be replied, that in almost all churches the rails round the communion table imply its being stationary in one particular place, I am constrained to add that the railing in of the communion table in one particular part of the church is merely one of Archbishop Laud's illegal innovations, which has been acquiesced in since the Restoration for the sake of peace, but which cannot be taken into account in our present argument. The continuance or discontinuance of the rails rests with the parishioners. I advert to the fact with regret, having no wish to disturb the arrangement, and the responsibility for such matters

being brought before the public mind must rest upon others. It is remarkable, however, that in the very case now more particularly before the public, the Round church at Cambridge, the rails have been removed. But here again, as in the former case, whether there are rails or not, the form of the article in question is to be such as is prescribed, and not such as has been carefully excluded ; it is to be a moveable table.

The second ground on which we rest the assertion that altars are unlawful in the Church of England is, The orders issued by, or under the authority of, the Crown in conformity with the powers and privileges granted to it, or acknowledged to belong to it, by Parliament.

This is to be considered rather as auxiliary to and confirmatory of the preceding. For these orders do not profess to give any direction upon the subject of altars or tables *different* to what was already in force, or as legislating *de novo* upon a thing about which no previous order had been given. On the contrary, the Queen's "Injunctions" recognize the removal of altars and placing of tables in their room as having been done according to the form of "the law therefore provided." And consequently, though it should be supposed that the orders we are about to refer to have no authority in the present day, the case would still stand firm on the first ground on which we have placed it. And in that case these orders can have no further weight than as historical evidence of the way in which the directions of the *rubric* were carried out.

But it is considered that these orders have a further authority, for reasons that shall be stated as we proceed, and that the directions contained in them, *at least* so far as they were put in force at the time, and be-

came usages of the church, are still part of our ecclesiastical law.

The first document is the "Injunctions" of Queen Elizabeth, in 1559, of which that relating to our present subject is given pp. 11, 12, above.

Now this injunction clearly recognises the law to be such as we have represented it to be, and is surely as strong an evidence of it as we can have ; and such being the law, the Queen left it to take its course (induced perhaps by the address presented to her by her principal divines on the subject, for there are words in the Injunction which seem to imply that she did not herself consider it a matter of much moment), and contented herself with ordering, so far as concerned the removal of the altars, that none should be taken down but by the oversight of the curate, &c., so that there might be no disorder in the removal ;* and *then further directs*, that the holy *table* in *every* church be decently made, and set in the place where the *altar* stood, and so stand "*saving when*" the communion is to be distributed, "*at which time*" it was to be "so placed" as might be most convenient, and "after the communion done" "to be *placed where it stood before.*" It was to be therefore a *moveable table*.

Upon what authority, then, do these injunctions rest? Clearly upon the power ceded to the Crown in the Act 1 Eliz. cap. 1, "to restore to the Crown the ancient jurisdiction over the estate ecclesiastical and spiritual;" the seventeenth clause of which runs thus,—“And that

* The law being already laid down, the *primary* object of this Injunction was, not to order again what was already commanded, but only to give some *further directions* on the subject ; and hence in the *original* edition, or at least in that copy of it which I possess, the title of the Injunction is,—not, as Sparrow, Wilkins, and Cardwell have printed it, "For tables in the Church," but—"For *the* tables in the Church."

also it may likewise please your highness that it may be established and enacted by the authority aforesaid, that such jurisdictions, privileges, superiorities, and pre-eminences spiritual and ecclesiastical as by any spiritual or ecclesiastical power or authority hath heretofore been, or may lawfully be exercised or used for the visitation of the ecclesiastical state and persons, and for reformation, order, and correction of the same, and of all manner of errors, heresies, schisms, abuses, offences, contempts, and enormities, shall for ever, by authority of this present Parliament, be united and annexed to the Imperial Crown of this realm." (Gibs. i. 44.) Upon the strength of this clause, which moreover I humbly conceive is beyond doubt unrepealed, Queen Elizabeth issued her "Injunctions" and "Visitation Articles;" and with all respect for those who have urged against the authority of those Injunctions that the clause in the Act for Uniformity, of 1559, giving the Queen power to issue orders with the advice of her high commissioners or the metropolitan, is repealed, I must submit that the objection, valid or not in itself, is altogether irrelevant. The Injunctions and Visitation Articles were issued by the Queen on her own authority, *for neither commissioners nor metropolitan were even appointed* at the time; and therefore the nature of the claim they have upon us must be measured by the amount of power vested in the Crown either inherently or by the Act above-mentioned. What that power may be, and whether it is sufficient to make the Injunctions legally binding, are questions into which I will not presume to enter.

Certainly, when issued, and for a long time after, they were looked upon as binding, for they are constantly referred to by the archbishops and bishops in

their Visitation Articles as equivalent to the law of the land, and therefore (whatever may now be practically the law of the land as it respects the power of the Crown in such matters) long established usages founded upon them would surely not readily be allowed to be disturbed.

About the same time that the Act above mentioned passed, was enacted also the Act for Uniformity. And this Act, in clauses 25, 26, gave power to "the Queen's Majesty," with the advice of the commissioners she had been previously authorized to appoint for causes ecclesiastical, or of the metropolitan, to issue further directions as to rites and ceremonies, &c. (Gibb. i. 271.) This power the Queen exercised. Have not, then, the directions so issued the force of law?

It has been urged against their validity, that the clauses that gave the Queen this power have been repealed. Now if we were disposed to stand upon a mere question of words, we might fairly ask, where and when? And so far as *words* are concerned, we apprehend that the statement is undeniably incorrect. But we freely admit that these clauses may be of no force now; and for this reason, that they gave the power to "the Queen's majesty" by name, not adding "her heirs and successors," or using the terms elsewhere used, "the Imperial Crown of this realm." But does it follow, that the orders issued by Queen Elizabeth under their authority, which clearly were legally binding at the time, fall with them? We apprehend not. Even the repeal of the clauses could surely do no more than deprive the Crown from that time of the power of issuing similar orders, and would not make the orders already issued, and legally binding, invalid, in the absence of express words to that effect.

There are two documents, then, to which we would refer of this character.

The first is the direction given in the "Orders taken by virtue of her Majesty's letters addressed to her highness's commissioners for causes ecclesiastical, in 1561, quoted p. 59, above, showing that there was to be a wooden communion-table in every parish, the word communion-BOARD being twice used.

The other is the direction given in what are called the "Advertisements," drawn up in January 1564-5, "that the parish provide a decent *table*, STANDING ON A FRAME, for the communion-table." (See p. 15 above.)

A question has been raised by some in modern times, as to whether these "Advertisements" were ever legally binding, that is, whether they were ever published in such a way as to satisfy the requirements of the Act for Uniformity. Upon this question depends, of course, the character of their evidence in the matter in hand. Now it certainly appears from Strype,* that the archbishop experienced some difficulty *at first*, in obtaining for them the direct and official sanction of the Crown, (though they were drawn up in obedience to a letter from the Queen to the archbishop on the subject,) the secretary and some of the Privy Council putting impediments in the way. But the same author observes afterwards,† that "the archbishop's patience and persistance prevailed," the observance of these "Advertisements" being enjoined by Archbishop Grindal, in the Metropolitan Visitation of the church of Gloucester, in the year 1576; a testimony of some force, because, as is well known, Archbishop Grindal was by no means inclined to press the observance of

* Parker, p. 157, or, i. 313, &c., Oxf. ed.

† P. 160, or, 319. And see Grindal's Life, p. 212, or, 316, Oxford ed.

the matters to which the "Advertisements" chiefly refer beyond what was necessary. Moreover, they are enjoined by Archbishop Parker, in his Visitation Articles (Art. iv.), as "set forth by *public authority*;"* recognised incidentally as of authority in the Constitutions of 1571,† and in the "Articles touching preachers, &c." issued by Archbishop Whitgift, in 1584;‡ coupled with the "Injunctions" by the same prelate, in his Visitation Articles for the diocese of Chichester, *sede vacante*, (Art. 5,) as "*her Majesty's Injunctions and Advertisements*;"§ quoted as of authority in the twenty-fourth of the Canons of 1604, which received expressly the royal sanction; and again in the Canons of 1640 (Can. 7), in the words, "it was ordered by the Injunctions and Advertisements of Queen Elizabeth;"|| and finally, stated by Heylin to have had "the stamp of royal authority."¶

With these testimonies, I leave it to the reader to determine their real character, only observing, that at all events they are of importance as illustrative and confirmatory of other evidence on the subject.

With these authorities we have to combine the full,

* Wilk. Conc. iv. 258. Dr. Cardwell seems to think, that these words imply a limited degree of authority, because they are not stated to be issued by royal authority, like the "Injunctions." But does not the distinction rather arise from the fact that the "Injunctions" were set forth by the Crown on its own authority, and the "Advertisements" authorized by the provisions of an Act of Parliament.

† Wilk. iv. 265, col. 1, 267, col. 2. ‡ Ib. 307. § Ib. 318.

|| Wilk. iv. 549, 550. I do not refer to these canons as of any authority, but merely as a testimony to the light in which the Advertisements were then viewed. "After the King's restoration," says Bishop Stillingfleet, "an Act of Parliament passed (13 Car. 2. c. 12,) for restoring the bishop's ordinary jurisdiction, wherein a clause is added, that this Act did not confirm those canons of 1640, but left the ecclesiastical laws as they stood 1639; which Act being passed by the King's assent, it voids the former confirmation of them, and so leaves them without force." (Eccl. Cases, p. 258, ed. 1702.)

¶ Hist. of Reform. p. 388.

powerful, and explicit proof we have in the historical documents given in the preceding pages, uncontradicted by one vestige of evidence of a contrary character during the reigns of Elizabeth and James I., that the *usage* maintained and enforced throughout the whole church, was such as we here contend it was by law required to be.

A stronger case could hardly be conceived.

Much has been said (tending only to obscure the question) as to the *material* to be used. And it has been triumphantly urged that some *altars* may be found at Rome and elsewhere, made of *wood*, as if such a fact had any relevancy to the point at issue.

It is not asserted that altars must necessarily be of stone. They might be made of earth, or brick, or wood, or, like the Jewish altar, of wood covered with plates of gold. The question is not, what materials are allowable for an altar, but of what material ought Church of England communion-tables to be made.

Nor is it of the slightest advantage to our opponents to point out passages asserting that the primitive Christians had wooden altars, for this is what we earnestly contend for, only remarking that when the word "altars" was used by them, it was used *metaphorically*, as Hooker* says, and that they were in fact wooden tables.†

But we assert that the Romanists have for several

* Eocl. Pol. bk. iv. c. xi.

† The remains of the ancient church of Peranzabuloe in Cornwall, lately brought to light, after having been for several centuries buried in the sand, have been referred to as showing that stone altars were in use in primitive times, one having been found in those remains. (See Trelawney's Peranzabuloe, p. 28, 5th ed.) But the citer of this case must have forgotten, that (as his own authority remarks,) "there is reason to believe that the church was not entirely buried till the *twelfth* century," and that it was in use certainly up to the time of the Norman invasion, (ib. p. 24,) and consequently till long after the period of the introduction of stone altars.

centuries considered it necessary that altars should be made of stone, or at least that the upper surface of the altar should be a slab of stone or marble, so necessary that nothing else is allowed to be consecrated as an altar. And this is notorious, notwithstanding the fact that there remain one or two ancient wooden altars or tables at Rome or elsewhere, which they are compelled to consider as altars, notwithstanding that they testify against their present practice, making the best of them as exceptions to a general rule, for if they did not, the still more inconvenient consequence would follow, that it would clearly be seen that they were openly and manifestly setting themselves against the usages of the ancient church. And hence our reformers, when they ejected and destroyed the Romish altars in our churches, and substituted tables, had those tables made of *wood*, in order more fully and completely to remove all similitude to the Romish altar. This *fact* is clearly established by the testimony of Bishops Jewel and Babington, the Orders of 1561, and the Canon of 1571. And the testimonies of Bishops Jewel and Babington, show us *why* wood alone was used, namely, as a protest against Romish errors, and as better suited to convey to the mind the notion of a table at which the communicants were to "keep the feast," and not offer a sacrifice. The question then is, whether, when we know that the Romish stone altars were removed out of our churches by authority, and tables required by authority to be substituted for them, and find from contemporaneous statements, that these tables were of wood, and so made *because* stone was considered on various grounds objectionable, and for the purpose of reducing them to the primitive standard, we may, nevertheless, now determine, that these tables may be made of stone, or brick, or earth, or any material which fancy may dictate. For if the door is

thrown open to one, it is to all. If the meaning of the word "table" in the rubric is not to be interpreted by the way in which it was acted upon at the period in which it was inserted, that way of acting upon it being considered a point of religious duty, involving important theological doctrine, the door is thrown open for any interpretation which men's humours may suggest. And when an open and avowed attempt is being made in the bosom of our church to "reappropriate" Romish errors rejected by us at the Reformation, and especially some of those connected with the eucharist, the same reasons that induced our martyrs and confessors of that period to view this matter as one demanding their zealous and earnest interference, have at least equal force in calling upon us to pursue a similar course at the present time.

That the *word* altar has been often used by our divines in speaking of the communion-table is very true;* and it may be rightly so used, as Hooker says; but then, as the same writer *adds*, it is used *metaphorically*.† And the frequent use of the word in this way by Christian writers, only makes the careful exclusion

* When Fox, in his *Acts and Monuments*, Pt. 2, p. 700, speaks of the Church of England using the words *altar* and *table* indifferently, he is speaking of the *first* Prayer-book of Edw. VI., and therefore the remark is altogether irrelevant to the present discussion.

† In what way such writers as Dr. Hickes, *the nonjuror*, may have used the word, or pleaded for the thing, is a matter which affords no argument as to what is the doctrine of the Church of England on the subject. His nonjuring brother, Dr. Brett, distinctly accuses the Church of England of a vital omission in her communion service, in leaving out the oblation of the consecrated elements, and therefore no doubt considered a true and proper altar necessary. (*Coll. of Ant. Lit. Dissert.*, p. 119—22.) And in the duty of making such an oblation, Dr. Hickes agreed with him. (See his *Christian Priesthood*.) I must add, that he was no "*bishop*" of any church. It is said, indeed, that he was consecrated by some of the nonjuring bishops, but if it was so, the memory of such a transaction had better be buried with those who were engaged in it.

of it from our Prayer-book the more remarkable, and a more pointed testimony in our favour. But to argue in favour of putting up stone altars, because some writers have called a communion-table metaphorically an altar, is merely an attempt to blind men's eyes to the real question at issue.

The truth however is, that under cover of the use of the *word*, metaphorically, by some of our divines, the thing itself is sought to be introduced, in order to pave the way for the admission of the Romish doctrine of the sacrifice. And singularly enough, the defenders of stone altars in our church, under the name of communion-tables, have argued for them on the ground that the eucharist is a sacrifice. Now without entering here upon the question whether there is any sense in which the Lord's Supper may be called a sacrifice, this argument is perfectly suicidal to their cause in the Church of England, for it is so notorious what the mind of the Church of England is in the matter, that those who erect altars *call* them communion-tables, when any question arises about them, and, therefore, if these structures are put up because they are better suited to such doctrine than a table, and so the fact is admitted, that these structures are places for sacrifice, or altars, then it follows immediately that these structures are not in accordance with the directions of the Church of England.

On the passage Heb. xiii. 10, so often cited on this subject, I will only add to the remarks quoted above, (p. 44,) from the learned Bishop Morton, that it is generally interpreted as referring to *the altar of the cross*, a phrase which Waterland has shown to have been in common use with the Fathers.*

The conclusion seems clearly to be this, that the

* Works, vol. viii. pp. 211, 12.

only thing which properly answers the legal requisitions of our church for the communion-table must have the three following characteristics :

First,—As to *material*, that it be made of *wood*.

Secondly,—As to *form*, that it be a table, in the ordinary sense of the word, that is, a horizontal plane resting upon a frame or feet.

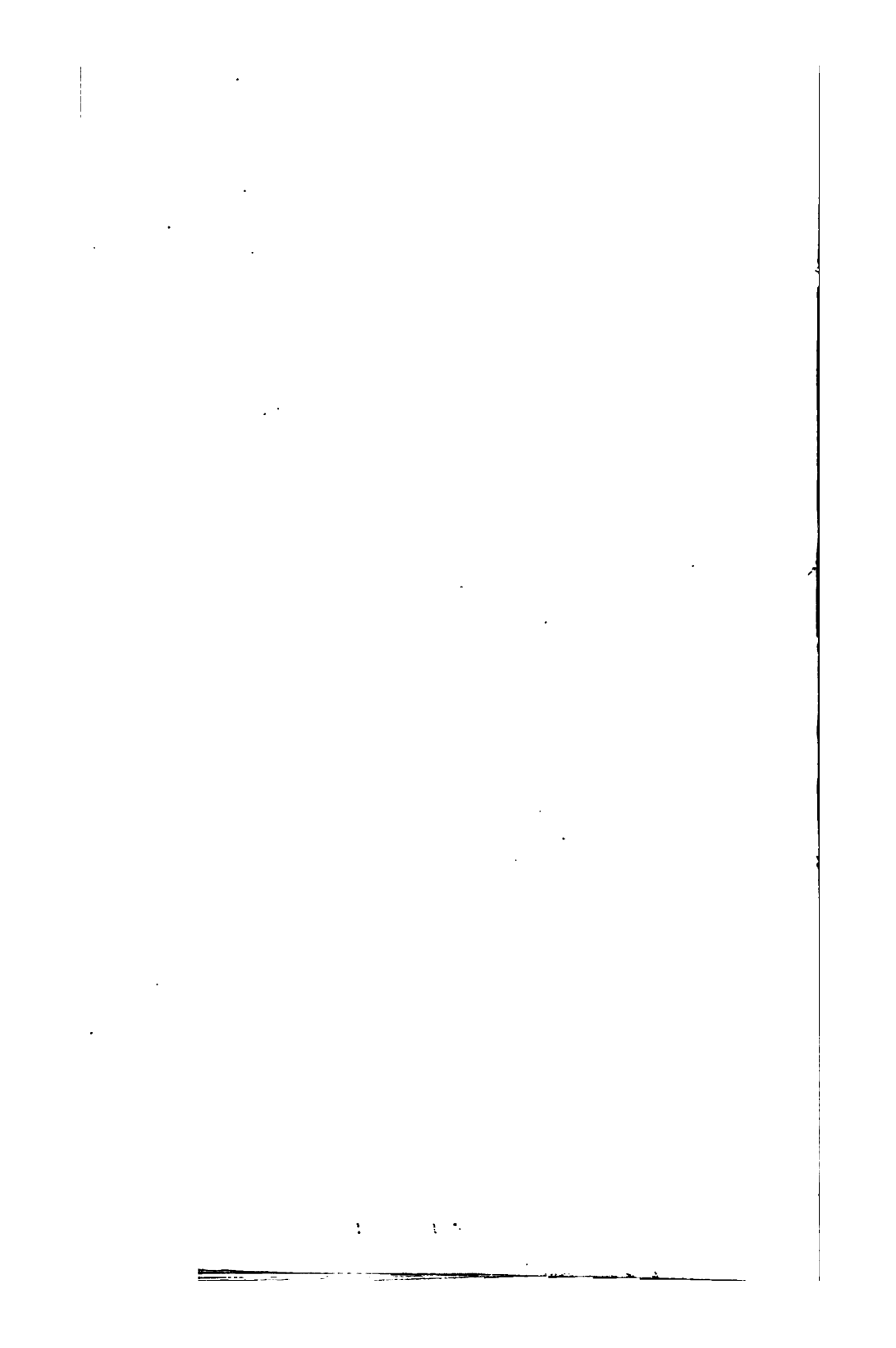
Thirdly,—That it be unattached, in any part, to the church, so as to be a *moveable* table.

One word, finally, to those who, are saying, what consequence is it of what form or material our communion-tables are made ? To this question we give two other questions in reply. First, if it is a matter of no moment, why has a party among us been so earnestly pressing the introduction of stone altars in our churches instead of the communion-table hitherto almost universally adopted, and disturbing the peace of the church for the sake of the innovation ? Secondly, in what light do you regard our Reformers ? for they and you are entirely opposed to each other on this question.

London, Dec. 16, 1844.

LONDON :

PRINTED BY G. J. PALMER, SAVOY STREET, STRAND.



ALTARS PROHIBITED

BY THE

CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

BY

WILLIAM GOODE, M.A. F.A.S.

RECTOR OF ST. ANTHOLIN, LONDON.

LONDON:

J. HATCHARD AND SON, 187, PICCADILLY.

1844.

1747.

1844. 1747.

LONDON :

G. J. PALMER, PRINTER, SAVOY STREET, STRAND.

ALTARS PROHIBITED
BY
THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

THE peace and welfare of the Church of England are becoming so seriously compromised by the almost unrestrained proceedings of certain parties among us in carrying out their avowed purpose of "unprotestantizing" the Church, that no effort, however humble, can be misplaced, in the endeavour to preserve it from the confusion and ultimate ruin to which their practices are tending rapidly to reduce it.

Of all the acts of these anti-protestant agitators, none perhaps more demands our attention at the present moment, than the attempt to substitute *altars* for *communion-tables* in our churches. Be it so, that in a few rare instances the *altar* has been suffered to remain, and from the total cessation of the popish controversy *within* our Church, may have been wholly harmless, (though, as I shall hereafter fully prove, in direct violation of the directions of the Church,) still the question of their admissibility at the present time is wholly different. They are now notoriously set up for the furtherance of Tractarian views of the nature of the sacrament of the Lord's

Supper. The communion-table is thrust out in *old* churches to make way for them. They are studiously introduced, wherever practicable, and even in the most disingenuous and characteristically Tractarian way, into *new* churches. And thus the purity of our Church's *doctrine* on the subject is placed in jeopardy. Common sense will tell the people that altars are intended for offering up *that which is placed upon them* as a sacrifice to God, and thus obtaining his favour.

A simple consideration of the history of altars among us at the period of the Reformation might be sufficient to show their unsuitableness to the doctrine of our Church.

Upon the settlement of the Reformation in this country, in the reign of Edward VI., one of the first points to which the attention of our reformers was directed, was the removal of the Romish *altars*, and the substitution of *tables* in their place; a step which of course peculiarly offended the prejudices and excited the indignation of the Romanists. On the accession of Queen Mary, one of the first acts of the Romanists was to remove the *tables* and re-erect the *altars*. And when Queen Elizabeth came to the throne, one of the first steps taken towards the restoration of the Reformation was, that the *altars* were made to give way to *tables*. Can there be a more manifest proof than these simple facts, that the one agrees better with the doctrine of our reformed Church, the other with the doctrine of our Church before it was reformed?

This is no mere matter of words, or names, or taste. There is a great and most important difference between the two things. An altar is that on which a sacrifice is offered up to God, and a sacrifice implies a sacrificing priest to offer it, and mediate between God and the people; and it is far worse than irrational to say, that a *change* of our tables into altars is not made for the purpose of instilling

this doctrine into the minds of the people, and will not have that *effect*. A *table* is obviously unsuitable for such a purpose, and therefore our Church, when prescribing tables to be used by us, in that very direction, necessarily, though only by inference, (and an inference which I care not to press,) condemns altars and the doctrine that flows from them. For though an altar might be called a *table*, (Mal. i. 12,) from the circumstance that men were permitted to partake of the sacrifices offered, it by no means follows that a table is a suitable and proper place on which to offer up a material sacrifice to God; and it is the consciousness of its unsuitableness that induces the Romanists and Tractarians to change it for an altar. Nor, on the other hand, is an altar suitable where a sacrifice would be displeasing to God, and where all that takes place, besides the *spiritual* sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, is a feast upon the symbols of a sacrifice offered once for all upon the cross, in which, to the faithful recipient, the real but spiritual presence of him who is thus represented is mercifully vouchsafed.

The question, then, which we are about to discuss is one of no slight moment. It is intimately connected with the preservation of the purity of the doctrine of our Church. The erection of altars in our churches is an important advance towards Rome; *an advance made in the very face of the express orders of the Church, to the contrary.*

I am unwilling here to notice more particularly, and by name, the cases in which this violation of the Church's orders has been allowed, lest I should appear to be speaking with reference to any individuals in our Church, especially any who, both from their position and character, demand the highest respect. I will only say, for the information of those who may not know exactly how matters are progressing in this direction, that the cases

are already numerous in which this has taken place, that the most strenuous efforts are being made by a large party in our Church (including, of course, the Tractarians, though not limited to those who *profess* themselves to be such) to carry out this infraction of the Church's ordinances; and that in this course they are *allowed* to proceed. Nor should I omit to add, that this is but *one specimen* of the *system* they are pursuing for the "re-appropriation" of doctrines and practices cast out of our Church at the Reformation. What other ultimate consequence can be expected by any one to result from such a state of things than *a complete disruption of the Church*, it is difficult to conceive.

The remarks of Dr. Nicholl, in his preface to his Commentary on the Common Prayer, (p. xiii.,) with reference to the conduct of the Nonjurors, may well call for our serious consideration at the present time. "Whatever little advantages," he observes, "may be compassed by these practices, they are certainly very dangerous ones; as tending to divide that church whose only strength and safety consists in its union. These projects have been once already tried, with a very lamentable success. For the miseries of the civil war were not owing to the Separatists and Sectaries, (for these were afterwards brooded in Cromwell's army,) but to the quarrels and distinctions made between Church-of-England men themselves. These unhappy differences kindled the first coals of the civil war, and blowed up the whole nation into flames. . . . And if this be not warning sufficient against trying the like experiments for the future, I know not what is." (Ed. 1710.)

My object, however, is simply and respectfully to offer evidence as to the nature of our Church's directions on the subject; evidence, the production of which may perhaps tend to strengthen the hands of those who are

really desirous of upholding, as far as their power extends, the interests of our Reformed Protestant Church. I shall not, therefore, on the present occasion, advert to the case of particular churches, nor even take up the question of *doctrine*, but confine myself to an historical delineation of the proofs that our Church requires *tables* to be used for the administration of the holy communion, and *prohibits* the use of *altars*.

The first movement in this matter appears to have been rather the natural consequence of the introduction of the doctrines of the Reformation, than in obedience to any direct order given by the authorities of the Church. For, as far as I am able to discover, the first direction given on the subject is in the Injunctions issued about June, 1550, by Bishop Ridley, for his diocese of London, and is in the following terms.

“Item, whereas in divers places some use the Lord’s board after the form of a table, and some as an altar, whereby dissention is perceived to arise among the unlearned; therefore, wishing a godly unity to be observed in all our diocese, and for that the form of a table may more move and turn the simple from the old superstitious opinions of the popish mass, and to the right use of the Lord’s Supper, we exhort the curates, churchwardens, and questmen here present to erect and set up the Lord’s board after the form of an honest table, decently covered, in such place of the quire or chancel as shall be thought most meet by their discretion and agreement, so that the ministers with the communicants may have their place separated from the rest of the people; and *to take down and abolish all other by-altars or tables.*” (See Burnet, Hist. of Ref., or Cardwell’s Doc. Ann.)

From the words here used, “we exhort,” it appears as if no order had then been given by authority on the sub-

ject; and that it had rather been left to time and persuasion to bring about the alteration. But we find, from K. Edward's Journal, that early in November of this year a general order was issued by the Council on this subject, as we there meet with the following entry:—
 "November 12. *There were letters sent to every bishop to pluck down the altars.*" (Burnet, vol. ii. Rec. No. 1.)
 The copy of the letter sent to Ridley (which was no doubt the same as the rest, there being nothing in it peculiar to his diocese) is extant, where the order runs thus,—
 "Whereas it is come to our knowledge, that, being the altars within the more part of the churches of the realm upon good and godly considerations are taken down, there doth yet remain altars standing in divers other churches, by occasion whereof much variance and contention ariseth amongst sundry of our subjects. . . . We let you wit, that minding to have all occasion of contention taken away . . . we have thought good, by the advice of our council, to require you, and nevertheless especially to charge and command you, for the avoiding of all matters of further contention and strife, about the standing or taking away of the said altars, to give substantial order throughout all your diocese, that with all diligence *all the altars* in every church or chapel, as well in places exempted as not exempted, within your said diocese, *to be taken down, and, instead of them, a table to be set up in some convenient part* of the chancel, within every such church or chapel, to serve for the ministration of the blessed communion." (Heyl. Hist of Ref. p. 96; Fox, Acts and Mon.; Cardwell's Doc. Ann. i. 89.) This letter is dated November 24; and with it were sent certain arguments,* to reconcile the people to the order, drawn up by Ridley. (Burnet and Collier.) That this letter was sent to the bishops generally, and

* Which we shall give presently. See p. 34.

not to Ridley only, appears from the fact that Day, Bishop of Chichester, appeared before the Council, November 30, to answer for his non-compliance with the king's letter for taking down the altars, and upon his persisting in his refusal of obedience to it he was *committed to the Fleet*. (See Burnet, and Collier, i. 306.)

There can be no question, then, what from this time, during the remainder of the reign of Edward VI., was the law of the church in this matter.

Accordingly, in the revision of the Prayer Book, in 1552, the word "table" was substituted for "altar," which had been allowed to remain in some places in the first Prayer Book of 1549, but was now removed, lest it should mislead any as to the nature of the sacrament.

This removal of the altars, indeed, was one especial charge brought against the Reformers in the reign of Mary. Thus in Ridley's "last examination before the commissioners," White, Bishop of Lincoln, complained, "Cyril also in another place, proving to the Jews that Christ was come, useth this reason, 'Altars are erected in Christ's name in Britain, and in far countries; ergo, Christ is come.' But we may use the contrary of that reason, 'altars are plucked down *in Britain*; ergo, Christ is not come.' . . . Ye see what a good argument this your doctrine maketh for the Jews, to prove that Christ is not come." I need hardly give Ridley's reply to such an argument, (if argument it could be called,) but at the close of it, he observes,—“As for the taking down of the altars, it was done upon just considerations, for that they seemed to come too nigh to the Jews' usage; neither was the supper of the Lord at any time better ministered, [or] more duly received, than in *those latter days when all things were brought to the rites and usage of the primitive church*.” (Works, P. S. ed. pp. 280, 281.)

And thus does this learned and pious bishop lament the restoration of the altars in Queen Mary's time. "O thou now wicked and bloody see, why dost thou set up again many altars of idolatry, *which by the word of God were justly taken away?* Oh! why hast thou *overthrown the Lord's table?*" (Lett. of Farewell to his Friends. Works, p. 409.)

Thus again does Becon bear witness *to the fact*, (and for that purpose only I quote him,) that the substitution of tables for altars was by, not a partial, but a general injunction. In his "Humble Supplication unto God for the restoring of his Holy Word," written in the time of Queen Mary, he says,—“Moreover heretofore we were taught to beat down the idolatrous and heathenish altars, which antichrist of Rome, intending to set up a new priesthood and a strange sacrifice for sin, commanded to be built up . . . and to *set in their stead, in some convenient place, a seemly table*, and after the examples of Christ, to receive together at it the holy mysteries of Christ's body and blood, in remembrance that Christ's body was broken and his blood shed for our sins. But now . . . have they *taken out of the temples those seemly tables*, which we, following the examples of thy dearly beloved Son and of the primitive church, used at the ministration of the holy communion,” &c. (Works, ed. 1563, vol. iii. fol. 16.)

But, in truth, no man who is at all acquainted with the documents of this period can be in doubt what was *the law or practice* of our Church on the subject during the latter part of the reign of Edward VI.

During the reign of Queen Mary the altars were of course restored.

We have now, then, to observe what course was pursued on the re-settlement of the Reformation, in the time of Queen Elizabeth.

Queen Elizabeth ascended the throne November 17, 1558. In April, 1559, was passed the act for uniformity of Prayer, &c., enacting that from St. John Baptist day following, the second Prayer Book of Edward VI. (with a few alterations) should be again "in full force and effect." Now this Prayer Book, as the divines who addressed Queen Elizabeth shortly after on the subject of altars, remind her, "*supposes a table* for the administration of the Holy Eucharist, and gives directions about it." (Collier, ii. p. 434.)

And here, let us observe, we see what these divines would have said *now*, as to what is required of us by our present Prayer Book alone, without adverting to other considerations; the rubric here referred to remaining unaltered.

There were of course, however, some in the church at that time, who were unwilling to take down the altars to which they had been so long accustomed to look with reverence, until some specific direction should force them to do so; and it seems not improbable that the Queen herself felt no great desire to enforce their discontinuance. One of the earliest acts, therefore, of the reformers was, to address the Queen for the removal of the altars, and placing tables in their room;* and accordingly, in the Injunctions issued in the *first* year of her reign, we have the following order for that purpose. "*For tables in the church.*—Whereas her majesty understandeth, that in many and sundry parts of the realm, the altars of the churches be removed, and tables placed for the administration of the Holy Sacrament, *according to the form of the law therefore provided*, [referring clearly to the act for uniformity]; and in some other places the altars be not *yet* removed, upon opinion conceived of some other order therein to be taken by her majesty's visitors; in the order whereof, saving for an

* See p. 36, below.

uniformity, there seemeth no matter of great moment, so that the sacrament be duly and reverently ministered; yet for observation of one uniformity through the whole realm, and for the better imitation of *the law in that behalf*, it is ordered, that no altar be taken down but by oversight of the curate of the church and the churchwardens, or one of them at the least, wherein no riotous or disordered manner be used. And that *the holy table in every church* be decently made, and set in the place where the altar stood, and there commonly covered as thereto belongeth, and as shall be appointed by the visitors, and so to stand, saving when the communion of the sacrament is to be distributed; at which time the same shall be so placed in good sort within the chancel, as whereby the minister may be more conveniently heard of the communicants in his prayer and ministration, and the communicants also more conveniently, and in more number, communicate with the said minister. And after the communion done, from time to time, the same holy table to be placed where it stood before." (Sparrow, p. 84.)* The remark implying that the change of altars into tables was a matter of no great moment, was probably inserted in deference to the Queen's feelings, and perhaps by the Queen herself,† who seems to have been less zealous in some matters of this kind than was desirable, as it was certainly not in accordance with the views of the leading divines of that

* In a volume entitled "Synodalia," among Archbishop Parker's papers at C. C. C. Cambridge, occur some "Interpretations and further Considerations" of the injunctions drawn up by the archbishops and bishops, in which it is directed, "That the table be removed out of the choir into the body of the church, before the chancel door, where either the choir seemeth to be too little, or at great feasts of receivings; and at the end of the communion to be set up again, according to the injunctions." (Cardwell, Doc. Ann. i. 205.)

† As she did in other cases. (See Cardw. Synod. i. 113.)

period; but however that may be, here was a clear *order* for the removal of the altars and the placing of tables in their room, and also a recognition of the fact that this was required by "*the law*."

And we happen to have express testimony that this order was carried out "throughout the kingdom." For in a letter of Thomas Sampson to Peter Martyr, dated Jan. 6, 1560, the writer, after regretting the shortcomings, as it appeared to him, of the work of reformation that was then going on, adds, "*The altars indeed are removed and images also* THROUGHOUT THE KINGDOM." (Zurich Lett. P. S. ed. p. 63.)* A most unexceptionable testimony, because he looked with a particularly jealous eye to what was done in this matter, and would have added a complaint on this head also, had it been otherwise.

Moreover, at the latter end of this year (1559) commissioners were appointed by the Queen to make a royal visitation throughout the kingdom, in the course of which all the clergy were required to subscribe a declaration that the Book of Common Prayer, and the orders and rules contained in the "Injunctions," were agreeable to the word of God, and the doctrine and use of the primitive and apostolic church, to which only one hundred and eighty-nine refused to put their names. (Strype, Annals, vol. i. p. 172.)

The proceedings of the commissioners with respect to St. Paul's Cathedral are related by Strype at some length; and he tells us that they enjoined the authorities of St. Paul's to "take care that the cathedral church should be purged and freed from all and singular their images, idols, and *altars*, and in the place of those *altars* to provide a decent *table* in the church for the ordinary celebration of the Lord's Supper." (Annals, vol. i. p. 160.)

* *Altaria quidem sunt diremta et imagines per totum regnum.*

The appointment of these commissioners, and the declaration they were instructed to obtain from the clergy, together with the whole character of their proceedings, show the resolution with which the Act for uniformity and the Injunctions were carried out and enforced: and the case of St. Paul's Cathedral, particularly specified by Strype, proves also that the prohibition of altars extended to *cathedral* quite as much as to *parochial* churches.

There is also another instance of the removal of altars, fortunately left on record by Strype, to which I would particularly call the attention of the reader, and which is given in the following words,—*April the 16th [1561] were all the altars in Westminster Abbey demolished, and so was the altar in the chapel of Henry VII.*" (Strype, Annals, vol. i. p. 267.) If, therefore, any one of these altars has been again erected, this has been done stealthily, and in direct violation of the ordinances of the church. How far, then, an altar so erected can be justly quoted as a proof that our church *allows* altars, hardly needs a remark.

In accordance therefore with the above orders, we find that in the "Interrogatories" attached to an edition of the Queen's Visitation Articles of 1559, given by Strype, and called by him "Inquiries of some ordinary at his visitation, instituted soon after the year the articles aforegoing [the Visitation Articles of Queen Elizabeth in 1559] were set forth," the second interrogatory for churchwardens is, "Whether all *altars*, images, holy water stones, pictures, paintings, . . . and all other superstitious and dangerous monuments; especially paintings and images in wall, book, cope, banner, or elsewhere, of the blessed Trinity or of the Father (of whom there can be no image made), be *defaced and removed out of the church and other places, and are*

destroyed, and the places where *such impiety* was, so made up, as if there had been no such thing there; or no?" (Strype's Annals, vol. i. App. No. xxi.)

On Oct. 10, 1561, the following order was issued by the Commissioners,—“It is ordered also, that the steps which be as yet at this day remaining in any cathedral, collegiate, or parish church, be not stirred or altered, but be suffered to continue. And if in any chancel the steps be transposed, that they *be not erected again*, but that the steps be decently paved, *where the communion-table shall stand out of the times of receiving the communion.*” (Heylin's Antid. Linc., 2nd ed., p. 46.)

In January 1564-5 were published the “Advertisements,” in which again we find the following order, “That the parish provide a decent *table, standing on a frame*, for the communion-table.” (Sparrow and Cardwell.) It has been said that the Queen did not officially give her sanction to these Advertisements. The question is not material, inasmuch as the order given in her Injunctions is sufficient, not to say that those Injunctions maintain that the act for uniformity establishing the second Prayer Book of Edward VI. requires the change of altars into tables. But seeing that in the very title of these Advertisements they are said to be “by virtue of the Queen's majesty's letters commanding the same,” (see title, and Strype's Parker, i. 307, and iii. 65, Oxf. ed.) and that in the year 1569 they are referred to by Archbishop Parker, in his Visitation Articles, as “set forth by public authority” (art. iv.), and again quoted as of authority in the constitutions of 1571, there can be little doubt that if her sanction was not formally, it was virtually, given to them. The matter in fact stands thus. By the Act for uniformity, it was enacted that with respect to the ornaments of the church, and the ministers thereof, and the

ceremonies or rites of the church, it should be lawful for the Queen, with the advice of her commissioners for causes ecclesiastical, *or of the metropolitan*, to issue any further orders. When, therefore, the "Advertisements, partly for due order in the public administration of common prayers and using the holy sacraments, and partly for the apparel of all persons ecclesiastical," were issued by the metropolitan five years after, expressly "by virtue of the Queen's majesty's letters commanding the same," it seems difficult to see what was wanting to give them authority. And, finally, they are expressly referred to by Archbishop Whitgift in 1585, in his Visitation Articles for the Diocese of Chichester, *sede vacante*, as "her Majesty's Advertisements;" (Wilk. iv. 318;) and again in the canons of 1640, as the "Advertisements of Queen Elizabeth." (can. 7.)

Proceeding in chronological order, we come next to the articles to be inquired of in the Metropolitan Visitation of Archbishop Parker in 1567, "in all and singular cathedral and collegiate churches within the province of Canterbury," among which occurs the following; "Item, whether your divine service be used, and your sacraments ministered, in manner and form prescribed by the Queen's Majesty's Injunctions, and none other way." (Art. 3. Wilk. iv. 253.) This again shows that the general orders in the "Injunctions" refer to "cathedral and collegiate," as well as parochial churches.

We proceed to the first *parochial* Visitation Articles of Archbishop Parker for the Diocese of Canterbury in 1569. Thus runs the 2nd article: "Item, whether you have in your parish churches all things necessary . . . specially the Book of Common Prayer . . . a *comely and decent table* for the holy communion, covered decently, and set in place prescribed by the Queen's Majesty's Injunctions . . . and whether *your altars*

be taken down ACCORDING TO THE COMMANDMENT IN THAT BEHALF GIVEN." (Wilk. iv. 257, 8.)

The next authority is from the canons of the synod of 1571, to which, on account of one of them, supposed to attribute authority to the writings of the early Fathers,* much deference is paid by some. We are told that here we see the mind of our Church, that here we have her solemn, deliberate, and unbiassed judgment. We therefore beg to recommend to the particular consideration of such the following injunction. *The churchwardens* shall provide *a table of joyner's work* for the administration of the holy communion.†

In the same year, (1571,) in the Injunctions given by Grindal, Archbishop of York, in his Metropolitan Visitation, to the clergy and laity of his province, we have among those for the laity the following order,—“Item, that the churchwardens in every parish shall, at the costs and charges of the parish, provide (if the same be not already provided) all things necessary . . . specially the Book of Common Prayer . . . a comely and decent *table, standing on a frame*, for the holy communion.” “Item, that the churchwardens shall see that in their churches and chapels *all altars be utterly taken*

* That preachers should exact the religious regard of the people only to such things as were agreeable to the doctrine of the Old and New Testament, and which the catholic fathers and ancient bishops had collected out of that very doctrine.

† *Æditui . . . curabunt mensam ex asseribus composite junctam, quæ administrationi sacrosanctæ communionis inserviat.* (Wilk. iv. 266.)

“In the framing of this book of canons, the Archbishop and the Bishops of Ely and Winton had the main hand; but all the bishops of both provinces in synod, in their own persons, or by proxy, signed it; but not the lower house. And the archbishop laboured to get the Queen's allowance to it, but had it not: she often declining to give her licence to their orders and constitutions, *reckoning that her bishops' power and jurisdiction alone, having their authority derived from her, was sufficient.*” (Strype's Parker, ii. 60, Oxf. ed.; as quoted by Cardwell, Synod. i. 111.)

down, and clear removed, even unto the foundation, and the place where they stood paved, and the wall whereunto they joined whited over, and made uniform with the rest, so as no breach or rupture appear ; and that the altar-stones be broken, defaced, and bestowed to some common use." (Grindall's works, P. S. ed. pp. 183, 4.)*

And that a strict uniformity was required in the forms and orders observed throughout the whole realm, is evident from a letter sent by the Council, in 1573, to one of the bishops, apparently supposed to be negligent in the matter, in the Queen's name, reminding him that all the churches of his diocese ought to be kept "in one uniform and godly order," and requiring him, "either by yourself, which were most fit, or by your archdeacons, or other able and wise men, personally to visit, and see, that in no one church of your diocese there be any difformity or difference used for those prescribed orders," i. e. "the orders set forth in the book of Common Prayer." (Wilk. iv. 279.)

Whether the conduct which elicited this reproof was caused by negligence or by party bias, I know not, but it is impossible not to feel that those two causes have produced the greater part of the evils by which our Church has been afflicted. If the orders and instructions of *the Church* had been from the first *mildly, steadily, and impartially* carried out, we should have been spared an incalculable amount of evil, confusion, and ill-will. But strictness and negligence often following close upon one another, party bias one way succeeding party bias of the opposite description, (and the transactions of Archbishop

* See also the articles sent by him to the Archdeacon of York, "to be put in execution with speed and effect," one of which is, "that the parish provide a decent table, standing in a frame, for the communion-table." (Ib. p. 155.)

Laud's time may show us how far party bias has at times carried its votaries beyond and in opposition to the doctrine and precepts of the Church,) have done more to produce discord, ill-will, confusion, and dissent, than any other cause that could be named. It is but natural that the laity should be restless and dissatisfied under such a state of things, and think that they are trifled with.

Let us now follow Archbishop Grindall to the see of Canterbury. In the articles drawn up for his *metropolitan* visitation of the *province* of Canterbury, in 1576, we meet with the following,—“Whether you have in your parish churches and chapels all things necessary . . . specially the book of Common Prayer . . . a comely and decent *table, standing on a frame*, for the holy communion.” “Whether in your churches and chapels *all altars be utterly taken down and clean removed, even unto the foundation, and the place where they stood paved*, and the wall whereunto they joined whited over, and made uniform with the rest, so as no breach or rupture appear?” (Works, P. S. ed. pp. 157, 8.)

And in the same prelate's “articles to be inquired of in all *cathedral* and *collegiate* churches” in his province in the same year, (1576,) one is,—“Whether your divine service be used, and the sacrament ministered in manner and form prescribed in the Queen's Majesty's Injunctions, and none other ways.” (Ib. p. 180.)

It is difficult to conceive more stringent and decisive testimony to the fact, that the erection of altars in our churches is directly opposed to the laws and ordinances of our reformed church. In fact, if altars are not prohibited, neither are rood lofts with their images, nor twenty other similar popish abominations, the removal of which rests only upon the same foundation as the removal of altars.

And this removal of the "altars" is recognised even in the Canons of Archbishop Laud's Synod of 1640, where it is said,—“ At the time of reforming this church from that gross superstition of popery, it was carefully provided that all means should be used to root out of the minds of the people, both the inclination thereunto and the memory thereof, especially of the idolatry committed in the mass, *for which cause ALL popish altars were demolished.*” (Art. 7. Wilk. iv. 549.)

Once more, in the last code of canons, passed in our church in 1603, the 82nd runs thus;—“ *A decent communion-table in every church. Whereas we have no doubt, but that in ALL churches within the realm of England, convenient and decent tables are provided and placed for the celebration of the holy communion, we appoint, that the same tables shall from time to time be kept and repaired, &c. . . . and so stand saving when the said holy communion is to be administered; at which time the same shall be placed in so good sort within the church or chancel, as thereby the minister may be more conveniently heard of the communicants in his prayer and ministration, and the communicants also more conveniently, and in more number, may communicate with the said minister;*” all which necessarily implies a *moveable table*.

And in an Act of parliament, passed in 1605, “altars” are expressly reckoned among “popish reliques.” It is there enacted, that “it shall be lawful for any two justices of peace, &c., to search the houses and lodgings of every popish recusant convict, or of every person whose wife is, or shall be, a popish recusant convict, for popish books and reliques of popery: and that if any altar, pix, beads, pictures, or *such-like popish reliques* . . . shall be found, . . . shall be presently defaced and burnt, if it be meet to be burned; and if it be a crucifix

or other relique of any price, the same to be defaced," &c. (3 Jac. I. c. 5. Gibson's Codex, i. 535, 6.)

Thus, then, stands the law of the case. It is useless, therefore, to inquire whether stone altars have been permitted to remain in some of our churches, because,—not to say that in all probability they have been stealthily re-erected, under the auspices of some popishly-inclined rector or bishop, or some thoughtless persons who have regarded them as ornamental,—wherever they are found, they stand *in direct violation of the repeated injunctions of the authorities of our church*. There is no doubt that in the times of Laud's archiepiscopate, there were those who took advantage of the favour known to be secretly felt in high quarters towards such things to re-erect altars in their churches. Nor can we be surprised at this, when we find a bishop of our church, at that period, inserting in his articles of inquiry for his diocese, in 1638, such questions as the following,—“Hath it [i. e. your chancel] ascents up unto the altar?” (Tit. i. art. 9.) “Is your communion-table OR ALTAR OF STONE, wainscot, joiner's work, strong, fair, and decent?” (Tit. iii. art. 7.)* The explanation of this we learn from the fact since ascertained, that he was a secret apostate to Rome while he remained a bishop of our church.† And on account of the scandal occasioned by acts of this kind, it was thought advisable, by the synod of 1640, when the times seemed to demand at least a little more *prudence* in such matters, to pass the following canon, that, to prevent any “*impertinent, inconvenient, or illegal inquiries in the articles for ecclesiastical visitations, this synod hath now caused a summary or collection of visitatory articles (out of the rubrics of the service book, and the canons and warrantable rules*

* Bp. Montague's Articles of Inquiry for Diocese of Norwich, in 1638.

† See Panzani's Memoirs.

of the church) to be made, and for future direction to be deposited in the records of the Archbishop of Canterbury," and "no bishop, or other person whatsoever, having right to hold, use, or exercise any parochial visitation," was to use "any other articles, or forms of inquiry upon oath, than such only as shall be approved and 'in terminis' allowed unto him (upon due request made) by his metropolitan under his seal of office;" of course out of the "summary" so left in the archbishop's hands, the title of the canon being, "one book of articles of inquiry to be used at all parochial visitations." (Can. 9. Wilk. iv. 550.) This canon is so remarkable, that I suppose it is undeniable that there must have been very strong grounds in the "*impertinent, inconvenient, and illegal*" inquiries of some of the bishops to call for it; and so I leave Bishop Montague's articles to the reader, to dispose of as he pleases, in conformity with "the rubrics of the service book, and the canons and warrantable rules of the Church."

But even then, few indeed went so far in opposition to the directions of the Church as to erect a stone altar. All that was attempted in general was to have the communion-table placed *altarwise* (as it was termed), i. e. with the *sides* east and west, and the *ends* north and south, close to the east end of the church, and there *railed in*. How far this was agreeable to the rubrics of the service book, or the directions of the Church, is a question into which I have no inclination to enter. These are minor points, and the controversy respecting them has happily long slept, and far indeed would it be from my wish to revive it. But at any rate this was all that generally was ventured upon. And all that Archbishop Laud himself made inquiry about in his metropolitanical visitation for the diocese of Lincoln, in 1634, was,—“Whether have you in your church a con-

venient and decent *communion-table*, &c., and whether is the same table placed in such convenient sort within the chancel *or church*, as that the minister may be best heard in his ministry and the administration, and that the greatest number may communicate?" (Holy Table, pp. 83, 4.)

Further; this substitution of *tables* for *altars*, in the time of Queen Elizabeth, was again (as it had been before) made the continual subject of reproach against our church by the Romanists.

Thus, in the anonymous popish pamphlet, entitled "An Addition," &c., published in 1561, on the burning of St. Paul's, the author speaks of that calamity as a judgment upon the Reformers for their desecration of the church in "destroying and pulling down holy altars," &c.; to which Bishop Pilkington, in his "Confutation," replies,—“ Now for *pulling down altars and ministering the communion on tables*, a few words to try, whether we do this without reason or example. First, our Saviour Christ ministered it sitting at a table: then it is not wicked but best to follow his doings; for he did all things well . . . and because *altars* were ever used for *sacrifices*, to signify that sacrifice which was to come, seeing our Saviour Christ is come already, has fulfilled and finished all sacrifices, *we think it best, to take away all occasions of that popish sacrificing-mass*, (for maintaining whereof they have cruelly sacrificed many innocent souls,) *to minister on tables*, according to these examples.”*

The same charge is reiterated by Dorman, in 1564,† and is thus replied to by the celebrated Dean Nowell,—“ First, that Christ instituted the sacrament at a *table*,

* Pilkington's Works, P. S. ed. pp. 539, 545—7.

† Proof of certain Articles, &c. Antw. 1564. See Nowell's Reproof of Dorman's Proof, cited below; and Strype, Ann. i. 163.

and not at an *altar*, is most manifest ; except M. Dorman would have us think, that men had altars instead of tables in their private houses in those days ; but our Saviour expressly saying that the hands of him who should betray him were upon the table, taketh away all doubting, Luke xxii. 21. And St. Paul, 1 Cor. x. 21, also calleth it *mensam dominicam* the Lord his *table* . . . If St. Basil, and some other old writers, call it an altar, that is no proper, but a figurative name, for that, as in the old law, their burnt offerings and sacrifices were offered upon the altar, *so are our sacrifices of prayer and thanksgiving, &c., offered up to God at the Lord's table, as it were at an altar.* But such kind of figurative speech can be *no just cause to set up altars rather than tables*, unless they think that their crosses also should be turned into altars, for that like phrase is used of them, where it is said, Christ offered up himself upon the altar of the cross. Now the old doctors (Chrys. hom. 18 in 2 Cor. August. Tract. 26, in Joann. et multi mult. loc.) do call it the Lord's table, usually, truly, without figure, and agreeably to the Scriptures. Concerning the spiritual worship or service of God, or sacrifice, if you will, (seeing it is also mentioned in S. Basil,) due to be done at the Lord's table, which, as afore is noted, he calleth an altar, it is not lacking *in our churches at the Lord's table* ; that is to say, true repentance of heart," &c. "And were you not altogether too gross, S. Basil so oft speaking of spiritual worshipping, and spiritual service, might somewhat reform your carnal and sensual understanding. You see we do not stick to grant you, not only a spiritual worship and service, but a sacrifice too, which yet hath no need of *your altars*, framed to yourselves, upon this false phantasie, that the body and blood of Christ are there offered by the priests for the quick and dead, with *the abuse of*

that distinction of the bloody and unbloody offering of Christ's body applied to the same ; which is altogether a false fable and a vain dream most meet for M. Dorman. The Scriptures, Heb. x. 10, 12, 14, do thus teach us, that Christ our Saviour once for all offered up his body and blood upon the altar of the cross, the one and only sacrifice of sweet savour, to his Father ; by the which one oblation of the body of Christ, a sacrifice for our sins, once for ever offered, and no more to be offered by any man, we be sanctified and made perfect. Wherefore the popish priests, which do repeat often the sacrifice of Christ's death, as they do teach, thereby, as much as in them lieth, do take away the efficacy and virtue of the sacrifice of Christ's death, making it like to the sacrifices of the old law ; the imperfection of which sacrifices St. Paul doth prove by the often repetition of the same. For the continuance whereof their priests also needed succession : but Christ is *a priest for ever, without succession*, and his sacrifice *perpetual, without repetition*, as the apostle, Heb. x. 11, plainly teacheth. *Our service and sacrifice now is the often and thankful remembrance of that only sacrifice, in the receiving of the holy sacrament at the Lord's table, according to his own institution ; Hoc facite in memoriam mei ; do this in remembrance of me :* with spiritual feeding by faith also, upon that his most precious body and blood, so by him for us offered. Touching THE PULLING DOWN OF YOUR ALTARS, *I answer, they are justly destroyed, as were those wicked altars by Asa, Josaphat, Esekias, Josias, godly kings of Juda, destroyed."* *

So Harding objects,—“ How condemn ye the Donatists, seeing with them ye break and throw down the holy altars of God ?” To which Bishop Jewell replies,—

* Nowell's Reproof of Dorman's Proof, 1565, 4to. fol. 15—17.

“Ye condemn us for heretics, for that we have taken down your shops and gainful booths, which ye call the holy altars of God. Verily this must needs be thought either extreme rigour, or great folly, of the removing of a stone to make an heresy. . . . Neither is there any good sufficient reason to be showed, wherefore it should more be heresy in us to *take down your needless and superstitious walls*, which ye had erected of yourselves, *without commission*, than it was lately in you, to tear in sunder, and to burn *our communion-tables*: in the erection and use whereof we had the undoubted example, both of Christ himself, and also of the ancient catholic Fathers. . . . As for the altars which Optatus saith the Donatists brake down, they were certainly *tables of wood, such as we have*, and not heaps of stones such as ye have: as in my former Reply made unto you, (art. 3, div. 26,) it may better appear. St. Augustine reporting the same story, (Ep. 50, ad Bonifac.) saith; the Donatists in their fury brake down the altar boards. His words be these: *Lignis ejusdem altaris effractis*. Likewise saith Athanasius of the like fury of the Arians; *Subsellia, thronum, mensam ligneam et tabulas ecclesie, et cetera quæ poterant, foris elata, combusserunt*; they carried forth and burnt the seats, the pulpit, *the wooden board*, the church tables, and such other things as they could get. Touching your stone altars, Beatus Rhenanus saith, *In nostris Basilicis Ararum superaddititia structura novitatem præ se fert*; in our churches the building up of altars added to the rest declareth *a novelty*. This learned man telleth you, M. Harding, that *your stone altars* are but *newly* brought into the church of God; and that *our communion-tables* are *old and ancient*, and have been used from the beginning. We have such altars, M. Harding, as Christ, his apostles, St. Augustine,

Optatus, and other catholic and holy Fathers had, and used, whose examples to follow we never thought it to be such heresy." *

The charge is repeated by Osorius, who, in his Treatise against Walter Haddon, speaking of the proceedings that had taken place in the English church under Queen Elizabeth, complains, that images, &c., and *altars* had been thrown down.† To which Haddon or Fox (for the answer was commenced by Haddon, but finished by Fox) replies,—“But as to what thou sayest, that images, pictures, crosses, and altars are cast down, I conceive that this part of the complaint does not much appertain to Luther, and the ministers of the Evangelical doctrine, inasmuch as they never put any hands to the destruction of images. Neither is it right, that those who are but private men, should by force and tumults take liberty to themselves to do anything in the commonwealth or church. But if *the magistrates, according to their lawful authority, with respect to anything which they see to be agreeable to the word of God, do piously and quietly execute their office therein*, what has Osorius, a private man and a stranger here, to do with this, either to quarrel at or that he should intermeddle with the matter. If King Sebastian, sovereign of the Portuguese, think meet to cherish and follow those parts of the Roman superstition in altars, in statues, in pictures, and the adoration of images, he hath the voices of the Scripture on the one side, of monks on the other, to hearken to which of the two he pleases; he may do in his own re-

* Defence of Apol. Pt. iii. ch. i. div. 3. Works, 1609, p. 315. See also his Reply to Harding's ans. in the ans. to Pref., and at art. 3, div. 26.

† *Imagines et signa, cruces, aras, disjecit.* Osor. in Gualt. Haddon de relig. libri tres. Diling. 1569. 12mo. lib. 3, fol. 178.

public what he thinks fit, at his own peril and pleasure. But, on the other side, if *Elisabeth, Queen of the English, the Scripture leading her, shall think meet, that these filthinesses of impure superstition, which no Christian may endure without endangering himself and his, be driven out of the empire*, truly she does nothing therein, which may not clearly be defended by the perspicuous authority of the sacred Scripture, and by the illustrious examples of the most approved kings." And then shortly after he proceeds to vindicate the destruction of the images and altars by testimonies drawn from the history and writers of the primitive church.*

Finally, in 1582, thus complains Gregory Martin, one of the divines of the English Roman Catholic college at Rheims. "*The name of altar*, (as they know very well,) both in the Hebrew and Greek, and by the custom of all

* Quod autem imagines et signa, cruces, et aras dijectas dicis, ad Lutherum et Evangelicæ doctrinæ ministros hanc querelæ partem haud multum attinere arbitror: quum illi nullas unquam manus diffringendis imaginibus injecerint. Neque enim æquum est, ut qui privati sunt, per vim et tumultus, quicquam sibi, in republica aut ecclesia permittant. Cæterum si magistratus, pro legitima sua autoritate, quod vident verbo Dei consentaneum, piè sedatèque munus in eo suum administrent, quid hic habet Osorius, homo privatus, et alienus, vel quod rixetur vel quur [sic] se intermisceat. Si rex Sebastianus Lusitanorum *Σεβαστος*, partes istas Romanæ superstitionis fovendas, ac sectandas sibi, in aris, in statuïs, in signis, et imaginibus adorandis censeat, habet hinc Scripturæ, hinc monachorum voces, quibus utrum maluerit auscultare, faciat in sua repub. suo ipsius periculo, et arbitratu, quod videbitur. Contra vero si Anglorum princeps Elisabetha, duce Scriptura, has impuræ superstitionis fœditates, quas sine suo suorumque periculo, nemo perferat Christianus, ab imperio rectius arcendas existimet, nihil profecto in eo facit, quod non et perspicua divinæ scripturæ autoritate, et magnis probatissimorum regum exemplis liquido tueatur. Nisi forte Ezechia, Josia, Josaphat parum laudandam memoriam existimet Osorius, qui aras et simulachra, et lucos, et serpentem æneum conciderant, aut Gedeonis etiam, qui quum rex non esset, lucum succidit, aram subvertit. Haddon. et Fox. Resp. Apol. Contra Osor. ed. 1577, lib. 3, fol. 271.

peoples, both Jews and Pagans, *implying and importing sacrifice*, therefore *we*, in respect of the sacrifice of Christ's body and blood, *say altar, rather than table*, as all the ancient Fathers (Chrys., &c. . . .) are wont to speak and write . . . though in respect of eating and drinking the body and blood it is also called a table; so that with *us* it is both an altar and a table, whether it be of wood or of stone. *But the Protestants, because they make it only a communion of bread and wine, or a supper, and no sacrifice, therefore they call it table only, and abhor from the word altar as papistical.* For the which purpose, in their first translation, (Bible, ann. 1562,) *when altars were then in digging down* THROUGHOUT ENGLAND, they translated with no less malice than they *threw them down.*" * And what says Dr. Fulke in his reply?—"That the ancient Fathers used the name of altar, as they did of sacrifice, sacrificer, Levite, and such like, improperly, *yet in respect of the spiritual oblation of praise and thanksgiving*, which was offered in the celebration of the Lord's supper, we do easily grant: as also, that they do as commonly use the name of table, and that it was *a table indeed*, so standing as men might stand round about it, and not against a wall, as your popish altars stand, it is easy to prove, and it hath oftentimes been proved: and it seemeth you confess as much, but that it is with you both an altar and a table, WITH US INDEED IT IS, AS IT IS CALLED IN THE SCRIPTURE, ONLY A TABLE. That we make the sacrament a communion of bread and wine, it is a blasphemous slander, when we believe as the apostle taught us, that it is the communion of the body and blood of Christ, and the

* Discovery of the manifold corruptions of the Holy Scriptures by the heretics. Rheims, 1582, 16mo. reprinted by Dr. Fulke in his "Defence of the English Trans. of the Bible." See the latter, ed. 1617, c. 17, § 15.

Lord's supper. . . . That the people whom the prophet Malachie reproveth, calleth the Lord's altar, his table, is no sufficient proof, that it might be called by the one name as well as the other. And although in respect of the meat offerings and drink offerings, it was also a table, at which God vouchsafed to be entertained by the people as their familiar friend. But what is this to the purpose of any controversy between us? The altar was called a table in the Old Testament, *but the table is never called an altar in the New Testament*, although by the ancient Fathers oftentimes." *

And to these remarks of Dr. Fulke let me add a confirmation of them from a learned bishop whom the Tractarians themselves have endeavoured to press into their service. "*Nor was it*," says Bishop Morton, "*without the direction of the Spirit of wisdom that the apostle changed the name altar into a table, as also many Fathers have done.*" And proceeding to justify those Protestants who objected to the use even of the name, altar, he adds, "If, therefore, some Protestants, calling to mind the temperance of the primitive age, which (as is confessed) *abstained from the names of priesthood and temples*, (we add, that which we have proved, and from *altars*,) have misliked the liberty of succeeding Fathers for alteration of the phrase, they are not herein to be judged adversaries, but rather zealous emulators and favourers of true antiquity. Neither yet have they been altogether so opposite unto the alleged Fathers of after times, as the Apologists, to engender an hatred against them, would make them appear, because they note in the Fathers a license in the use of terms only, but no error in doctrine; saying, that *by such custom of speech Optatus gave posterity an occasion of*

* Fulke's Def. of Engl. Transl. of Bible, c. 17, § 15 and 17, ed. 1617, pp. 174, 5.

superstition : directly implying that the judgment of our ancestors was sound in this matter, and that the error concerning the nature of *altar* and *sacrifice*, arising from the common use of such phrases, possessed only their posterity. For we are taught from St. Chrysostome and St. Augustine, that the word *table* went for current in their times." "The primitive antiquity (as hath been confessed) did abstain from the name of *priest*, and so consequently of *altars* and *sacrifice*, terming them according to the tenor of the New Testament, elders or bishops, *tables* and eucharist. In the aftertimes, the Church being then established in the truth of doctrine, the Fathers might presume to take a greater liberty of speech, knowing that they should be understood of catholic hearers catholicly. But because ages more degenerate did set, as it were, a bias upon the phrases of *priest*, *altar*, *sacrifice*, (which had been used of the Fathers improperly,) to draw them to a proper signification, flat contrary to their first intention; therefore did Protestants wish that those objected ancient Fathers had rather contained themselves within their more ancient restraints, than that the liberty of their speeches should have occasioned in the Romanists that prodigal error in doctrine which we shall hereafter unfold." *

May we not add a hope that care will be taken by those who are able to do so,—that as the liberty thus taken by some of the Fathers, in the use of these terms, produced a harvest of error, so the liberty that has grown up among ourselves, not only of speech, but with respect to the position and arrangements of the communion-table

* Morton's Catholic Appeal for Protestants. 1610. lib. 2, c. 6, § 2, and c. 7, § 1, pp. 164—6. Whether or not the name altar was used by the earliest Fathers, is a question into which I will not here enter, but the above clearly shows Bishop Morton's opinion of the matter under discussion in these pages.

since the Elizabethan era, and principally in the time of Archbishop Laud, contrary to the canon, however harmless in themselves, may not lead to a similar result.

I will add one more witness to the state of things in our Church in the point in question in former times,—the excellent Bishop Babington. In his notes on Exodus, first published in 1604, he says, on chap. 27, “Concerning the altar how it was made for matter, &c. . . . the text is plain in the eight first verses. For the use to us we may note two things: first, that it was a figure of Christ, as the apostle to the Hebrews (Heb. xiii. 10, &c.) expoundeth it. And secondly, that *the altars used in Popery are not warranted by this example. But that the primitive churches used communion-tables (AS WE NOW DO) of boards and wood, not altars (as they do) of stone.* Origen was about two hundred years after Christ, and he saith that Celsus objected it as a fault to the Christians, *Quod nec imagines, nec templa, nec aras haberent*: that they had neither images, nor churches, nor altars. Arnobius (after him) saith the same of the heathens: *Accusatis nos quod nec templa habeamus, nec aras, nec imagines*: You accuse us for that we have neither churches, nor altars, nor images. Gerson saith, that *Silvester* first caused stone altars to be made, and willed that no man should consecrate at a wooden altar, but himself and his successors there. Be-like, then, the former ages knew not that profound reason, that altars must be of stone, *quia Petra erat Christus*, because the rock was Christ, as Durandus after devised. Upon this occasion, *in some places*, stone altars were used for steadiness and continuance, wooden tables having been before used; but I say, *in some places, not in all.* For Saint Augustine saith, that in his time in Africa they were made of wood. For the

Donatists, saith he, *brake in sunder the altar-boards*. Again, the deacons' duty was *to remove the altar*. Chrysostom calleth it, *the holy board*. St. Augustine, *Mensa Domini, the table of the Lord*. Athanasius, *Mensam ligneam, the table of wood*. Yet was this communion-table called an altar, not that it was so, but only by allusion metaphorically, as Christ is called an altar, or our hearts be called altars, &c. Mark with yourself, therefore, *the newness of this point for stone altars in comparison of OUR ANCIENT USE OF COMMUNION-TABLES*, and let Popery and his parts fall, and truth and sound antiquity be regarded." * And so elsewhere, (on chap. 20,) he says, "Also it might be showed how the communion-tables be called of the old Fathers both *tables* and *altars* indifferently; *tables*, as they are indeed, and *altars*, as they are improperly; how they were *made of boards, and removable*, set in the midst of the people, and not placed against a wall, with divers other things." †

"And undoubtedly," as Bishop Morton says, "if material *altars* (properly so called) had been in use in Christianity at that time, the holy Fathers would not have then concealed this, especially when as the want of altars was objected against them as a note of atheism." ‡

Here, then, I might well leave the matter to the reader's decision, without adding another word. But the subject is so important, that I need make no apology for subjoining some further testimonies and remarks bearing upon it. And, first, two documents,—namely, the "Reasons" of Bishop Ridley, and the "Reasons" of our leading Protestant divines in 1559, presented to

* Babington's Works, ed. 1622, p. 307.

† Id. ib. p. 279.

‡ Of the Lord's Supper, ed. 1652, l. 6, c. 5, § 15, p. 465. See whole section.

Queen Elizabeth, for the substitution of *tables* for *altars*,—which are clearly entitled to more than ordinary regard in forming an opinion of the mind of our Reformers on this subject.

We have already seen, that one of the first decisive movements in this matter was made by Bishop Ridley in the visitation of his diocese in June, 1550; and that he drew up certain reasons and arguments on the subject which the King and his Council thought fit to annex to their circular letter to the bishops for removing altars, sent round in the following November. This document, then, is so important in connexion with this subject, that I shall give it to the reader entire.

“First reason. The form of a table shall more move the simple from the superstitious opinions of the popish mass, unto the right use of the Lord's Supper. For the use of an altar is to make sacrifice upon it: the use of a table is to serve for men to eat upon. Now, when we come unto the Lord's board, what do we come for? to sacrifice Christ again, and to crucify him again, or to feed upon him that was once only crucified and offered up for us? If we come to feed upon him, spiritually to eat his body, and spiritually to drink his blood, (which is the true use of the Lord's Supper,) then no man can deny but the form of a table is more meet for the Lord's board than the form of an altar.

“Second reason. Whereas it is said, ‘The Book of Common Prayer maketh mention of an altar;* wherefore it is not lawful to abolish that which the book alloweth;’ to this it is thus answered, The Book of Common Prayer calleth the thing whereupon the Lord's Supper is ministered indifferently a table, an altar, or

* The Book of Common Prayer at this time being the *first* book of Edw. VI., or that of 1549. The second was not published till 1552.

the Lord's board ; without prescription of any form thereof, either of a table or of an altar : so that whether the Lord's board have the form of an altar, or of a table, the Book of Common Prayer calleth it both an altar and a table. For as it calleth it an altar, whereupon the Lord's Supper is ministered, a table, and the Lord's board, so it calleth the table, where the holy communion is distributed with lauds and thanksgiving unto the Lord, an altar, *for that* there is *offered* the same sacrifice of *praise and thanksgiving*. And thus it appeareth, that here is nothing either said or meant contrary to the Book of Common Prayer.

“ Third reason. The popish opinion of mass was, that it might not be celebrated but upon an altar, or at the least upon a super-altar, to supply the fault of the altar, which must have had its prints and characters ; or else it was thought that the thing was not lawfully done. But this superstitious opinion is more holden in the minds of the simple and ignorant by the form of an altar than of a table ; wherefore it is more meet, for the abolishment of this superstitious opinion, to have the Lord's board after the form of a table, than of an altar.

“ Fourth reason. The form of an altar was ordained for the sacrifices of the law, and therefore the altar in Greek is called *θυσιαστήριον*, *quasi sacrificii locus*. But now both the law and the sacrifices thereof do cease : wherefore the form of the altar used in the altar ought to cease withal.

“ Fifth reason. Christ did institute the sacrament of his body and blood at his last supper at a table, and not at an altar ; as it appeareth manifestly by the three evangelists. And St. Paul calleth the coming to the holy communion, the coming unto the Lord's supper. And also it is not read that any of the apostles or the primitive church, did ever use any altar in ministration

of the holy communion. Wherefore, seeing the form of a table is more agreeable to Christ's institution, and with the usage of the apostles and of the primitive church, than the form of an altar, therefore the form of a table is rather to be used, than the form of an altar, in the administration of the holy communion.

"Sixth and last reason. It is said in the preface of the Book of Common Prayer, that if any doubt do arise in the use and practising of the same book, to appease all such diversity, the matter shall be referred unto the bishop of the diocese, who, by his discretion, shall take order for the quieting and appeasing of the same, so that the same order be not contrary unto anything contained in that book." *

The other document is, the "Reasons" drawn up by the leading divines of the Reformation, shortly after Queen Elizabeth's coming to the throne, and previously to the issue of her "Injunctions," "to be offered to the Queen's Majesty's consideration, *why it was not convenient that the communion should be ministered at an altar.*" They are thus given by Strype "verbatim," as found "in an authentic manuscript."

"First, The form of a table is most agreeable to Christ's example, who instituted the sacrament of his body and blood at a table, and not at an altar.

"Secondly, The form of an altar was convenient for the Old Testament, to be a figure of Christ's bloody sacrifice upon the cross: but in the time of the New Testament, Christ is not to be sacrificed, but his body and blood spiritually to be eaten and drunken in the ministration of the holy supper. For representation whereof, the form of a table is more convenient than an altar.

"Thirdly, The Holy Ghost in the New Testament,

* Ridley's Works, P. S. ed. pp. 322, 3; or Fox's Acts and Monum. book 9, pp. 47, 8, vol. ii. ed. 1684.

speaking of the Lord's Supper, doth make mention of a table, 1 Cor. x., *mensa Domini*, i. e. the table of the Lord; but in no place nameth it an altar.

"Fourthly, The old writers do use also the name of a table: for Augustine oftentimes calleth it *mensam Domini*, i. e. the Lord's table. And in the canons of the Nicene Council it is divers times called *divina mensa*. And Chrysostom saith, *Baptismus unus est, et mensa una*, i. e. There is one baptism and one table. And although the same writers do sometimes term it an altar, yet are they to be expounded to speak *abusive et improprie*. For like as they expound themselves, when they term the Lord's Supper a sacrifice, that they mean by this word *sacrificium*, i. e. a sacrifice, *recordationem sacrificii*, i. e. the remembrance of a sacrifice; or *similitudinem sacrificii*, i. e. the likeness of a sacrifice, and not properly a sacrifice; so the same reason enforceth us to think, that when they term it an altar, they mean a representation or remembrance of the altar of the cross; and not of the form of a material altar of stone. And when they name it a table, they express the form then commonly in the church used according to Christ's example.

"Fifthly, Furthermore, an altar hath relation to a sacrifice: for they be *correlativa*. So that of necessity, if we allow an altar, we must grant a sacrifice: like as if there be a father, there is also a son; and if there be a master, there is also a servant. Whereupon divers of the learned adversaries themselves have spoken of late, that *there is no reason to take away the sacrifice of the mass, and to leave the altar standing*; seeing the one was ordained for the other.

"Sixthly, Moreover, if the communion be ministered at an altar, the godly prayers, &c., spoken by the minister cannot be heard of the people; especially in

great churches.* And so the people should receive no fruit of this part of English service. For it was all one to be in Latin and to be in English, not heard nor understood of the people.

“And *admitting that it were* a thing which in some time might be *tolerated*, yet at this time the continuance of altars would bring marvellous inconveniences.

“First, The adversaries will object unto us (as they have accustomed) inconstancy, in that the order established by King Edward of famous memory, with the assent of so many learned men, is now again reversed and altered.

“Secondly, Moreover, the most part, or almost all the preachers of this realm, which do heartily favour this your Majesty’s reformation in religion, have oftentimes in their several sermons (and that upon the ground of God’s word before rehearsed, and other) spoken and preached against altars, both in King Edward’s days and sithence; and therefore cannot with good conscience, and without confession of a fault committed before, speak now in defence of them. For as St. Paul saith, *Si quæ destruxi ea rursum ædifico, transgressorem meipsum constituo*; i. e. If I build up again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.

“Thirdly, Furthermore, whereas your majesty’s principal purpose is utterly to abolish all the errors and abuses

* We here see one reason why, when it was afterwards ordered in the Queen’s Injunctions that the communion-table should be “set in the place where the altar stood,” there to stand ordinarily, it was also directed that “when the communion of the sacrament is to be distributed,” it should be “so placed in good sort within the chancel, as whereby the minister may be more conveniently heard of the communicants in his prayer and ministration,” &c.; and in the rubric subsequently, that “at the communion time” it should “stand in the body of the church, or in the chancel, where morning and evening prayer are appointed to be said.”

used about the Lord's Supper, especially to root out the popish mass, and all superstitious opinions concerning the same, *the altar is a means to work the contrary, as appeareth manifestly by experience.* For in all places the mass-priests (which declare by evident signs that they conform themselves to the order received, not for conscience, but for their bellies' sake) are *most glad of the hope of retaining the altar, &c., meaning thereby to make the communion as like a mass as they can,* and so to continue the simple in their former errors.

"Fourthly, And on the other side, the consciences of many thousands, which from their hearts embrace the Gospel, and do most earnestly pray to God for your grace, shall be wounded, by continuance of altars; and great numbers will abstain from receiving the communion at an altar: which in the end may grow to occasion of great schism and division among the people. And the rather, because that in a great number of places altars are removed, and a table set up already, according to the rites of the book now published.

"Fifthly, And whereas her Majesty hath hitherto declared herself very loath to *break ecclesiastical laws established by parliament,* till they were repealed by like authority, it will be much mused at, if any commandment should come forth now for the re-edification of altars, seeing there be *special words in the Book of Service allowed by Parliament, and having force of a law, for the placing and using of a table at the ministration of the communion.** Which special words cannot be taken away by general terms.

"Sixthly, Moreover, the altars are none of those things

* The reader will observe that these divines make no question that to erect an altar in the face of the directions given in the rubric as to a communion-table, is to "break ecclesiastical laws established by parliament."

which were established by act of parliament in the second year of King Edward of famous memory. For Dr. Ridley, late Bishop of London, procured taking down of altars in his diocese about the third year of the said king; and defendeth his doings by the king's first book, set forth anno 2nd Edward VI. And immediately after, *the king's majesty and his council gave A GENERAL COMMAND THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE REALM to do the like* before the second book was made. And Dr. Day, Bishop of Chichester, was committed to prison, because he would not obey the said order. Which thing they would not have done, if altars had been established by authority of the said parliament.

"Seventhly, It may please your grace also to call to remembrance, that *the greatest learned men of the world*, as Bucer, Ecolampadius, Zuinglius, Bullinger, Calvin, Martyr, Joannes a Lasco, Hedio, Capito, and many more, have in their reformed churches in Sabaudia, Helvetia, Basil, Geneva, Argentine, Wormes, Frankford, and other places, always taken away the altars; only Luther and his churches have retained them. In the which churches be some other more imperfections; as gilding of images, the service of the church half Latin, half Dutch, and elevation of the sacrament of the altar. All which things Melancthon, when he is called to counsel for a reformation to be had in other places, doth utterly remove. And in Saxony they are tolerated hitherto only because of Luther's fame; but are thought that they will not long continue, being so much disliked of the best learned.

"Eighthly, It may also please your majesty to join hereunto *the judgment of the learned and godly martyrs of this realm*, who of late have given their lives for the testimony of the truth; as of Dr. Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, who protested in writing, (whereupon he

was first apprehended,) that the order appointed by the last book of King Edward was most agreeable to the Scriptures, and the use of the primitive church. And also of Dr. Ridley, Bishop of London, who travailed especially in this matter of altars; and put certain reasons of his doing in print, which remain to this day: of Mr. Latimer, Mr. Hooper, Mr. Bradford, and all the rest, who to the end did stand in defence of that book. So that by re-edifying of altars, we shall also seem to join with the adversaries that burnt those good men, in condemning some part of their doctrine.

“ And last of all, it may please your Majesty to *tender the consent of your preachers and learned men, as now do remain alive, and do earnestly, and of conscience, and not for livings’ sake, desire a godly reformation*; which if they were required to utter their minds, or thought it necessary to make petition to your grace, would with one mind and one mouth (as may be reasonably gathered) be most humble suitors to your Majesty, that they might not be enforced to return unto *such ordinances and devices of men, not commanded in God’s word: being also once abrogated, AND KNOWN BY EXPERIENCE TO BE THINGS HURTFUL, and only serving either to nourish the superstitious opinion of the propitiatory mass in the minds of the simple, or else to minister an occasion of offence and division among the godly-minded.*” *

These documents very clearly show what were the views of our Reformers upon this subject. How, indeed, could any impartial person have a doubt respecting their opinions in the matter, when with one voice they maintain, that there is no sacrifice in the Eucharist but a spiritual sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, offered as

* *Strype’s Annals*, vol. i. part i. pp. 160, &c. *Oxf. ed.* pp. 237, &c.

much by each worshipper present as by the minister himself.

"We must take heed," says one of the homilies of 1562, "lest of the memory it be made a sacrifice." "Herein," i.e. for the application of Christ's merits, "thou needest no other man's help, no other sacrifice or oblation, [i. e. than Christ's, which had been mentioned just before,] no sacrificing priest, no mass, no means established by man's invention." *

"Seeing, then," says Hooker, "that *sacrifice is now no part of the Church ministry*, how should the name of priesthood be thereunto rightly applied? Surely even as St. Paul applieth the name of flesh unto that very substance of fishes which hath a proportionable correspondence to flesh, although it be in nature another thing. . . . The fathers of the church of Christ with like security of speech call usually the ministry of the gospel *priesthood*, in regard of that which the Gospel hath proportionable to ancient sacrifices, namely, *the communion* of the blessed body and blood of Christ, although *it have properly now no sacrifice* . . . in truth the word *presbyter* doth seem more fit, and in propriety of speech more agreeable than *priest*, with the drift of the whole Gospel of Jesus Christ." †

"The very spring and root of your error," says the famous Bishop Bilson to the Papists, "is this, that you seek for a sacrifice in the Lord's Supper, besides the Lord's death. Mark well the words of Cyprian, *The passion of the Lord is the sacrifice which we offer*." . . . "Christ is offered daily but mystically, not covered with qualities and quantities of bread and wine; for those be neither mysteries nor resemblances to the death of Christ: but by the bread which is broken, by the

* Hom. conc. the Sacrament, part i.

† Eccl. Pol. v. 78.

wine which is drunk; in substance, creatures; in signification, sacraments; the Lord's death is figured and *proposed to the communicants*, and they for their parts, NO LESS PEOPLE THAN PRIEST, do *present Christ hanging on the cross to God the Father, with a lively faith, inward devotion, and humble prayer, as a most sufficient and everlasting sacrifice for the full remission of their sins, and assured fruition of his mercies.* OTHER ACTUAL AND PROPITIATORY SACRIFICE THAN THIS THE CHURCH OF CHRIST NEVER HAD — NEVER TAUGHT." "The celebration of the Lord's Supper may be called an oblation; first, for that it is a representation of Christ's death, and sacraments have *the names* of the things which they *signify*; next, because the merits and fruits of Christ's passion are by the power of his Spirit divided and bestowed on the faithful receivers of these mysteries." "Neither they [i. e. other Protestants] nor I ever denied the Eucharist to be a sacrifice. The very name inforceth it to be *the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, which is* THE TRUE AND LIVELY SACRIFICE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT The Lord's table, in respect of his graces and mercies, there proposed to us in [is] an heavenly banquet, which we must *eat and not sacrifice*: but the duties which he requireth at our hands when we approach to his table, are sacrifices, not sacraments: as, namely, to offer him thanks and praise, faith and obedience, yea, our bodies and souls to be living, holy, and acceptable sacrifices unto him, which is our reasonable serving of him." "This [i. e. that 'the sacrament is a sacrifice'] we grant to be most true *in that sense* which St. Augustine and other ancient and catholic Fathers do avouch it: that is, *because sacraments have the names of those things whose sacraments they are.* And since this is the sacrament of the Lord's death and passion, we do not stick to say, that

Christ is daily crucified and sacrificed for the sins of the world: marry, not really, or corporally, but by way of a mystery; *that is, his cross and blood-shedding are proclaimed and confirmed* IN THE EYES OF ALL THE FAITHFUL *by these signs of his death, and seals of his truth*, by which he first witnessed that his body should be broken, and his blood shed for the remission of our sins."*

I will add but one more testimony as to the teaching of our Church on this point, and that shall be from the learned Bishop Morton, principally with reference to the text so often misapplied on this subject.

"If furthermore," he says, "we speak of the altar, you will have it to be rather on earth below, and to that end you object that scripture, Heb. xiii. 10. *We have* (θυσιαστηριον) *that is, an altar* (saith the apostle) *whereof they have no right to eat, that serve at the Tabernacle.* This some of you greedily catch at, for proof of a proper sacrifice in the mass, and are presently repulsed by your Aquinas, expounding the place to signify either his *altar upon the cross, or else his body, as his altar in heaven*, mentioned, Apoc. 8, and called *the golden altar.*" Adding, that so this altar was expounded in the "Anti-Didagma of the Divines of Collen," as "the body of Christ himself in heaven, upon which, and by which, all Christians are to offer up their spiritual sacrifices of faith," &c., and that Cardinal Belarmine admits, that thus many Catholic divines interpreted it; and that the Jesuit Estius himself interpreted it as meaning "the cross of Christ's sufferings." "If we would understand," he goes on to say, "wherein the difference of the Jewish religion and Christian pro-

* Bilson, Of Subjection and Rebellion, part iv. pp. 511—522, ed. 1586. See the whole context, where there is a masterly discussion of the whole subject.

fession especially consisteth, in respect of priesthood, Augustine (Adv. Jud. c. 9) telleth us, that *they have no priesthood ; and the priesthood of Christ is eternal in heaven*. And the holy Fathers give us some reasons for these and the like resolutions. For if any would know the reason why we must have our confidence in the celestial *priest, sacrifice, and altar* ; Œcumenius (Heb. x.) and Ambrose (in Heb. x.) will show us that it is because *here below there is nothing visible ; neither temple, ours being in heaven ; nor priest, ours being Christ ; nor sacrifice, ours being his body ; nor yet altar*, saith the other. Hear your own Canus ; (loc. theol. lib. xii. c. 12 ;) *Christ offereth an unbloody oblation in heaven*. Chrysostom will not be behind his disciple Œcumenius in expressions, who differenceth our Christian religion from the Jewish, for that (in Heb. hom. 11, in Moral.) *our sanctuary, priest, and sacrifice is in heaven*. And if Christians intend any other sacrifice than that, he admonisheth that they may be such, which may be accepted of in the heavenly sanctuary ; as, namely, *the sacrifice of justice, praise, and of a contrite spirit*, and the like, all merely spiritual, (as you confess,) and therefore but *metaphorically* called *sacrifices*." *

Hence our Reformers, holding that we have no other sacrifices to offer but such as are spiritual, the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, of holy purposes and actions, deemed it a duty, as we have seen, carefully to remove from our churches those *altars* which imported, and were only suitable for material sacrifices ; and to place in their stead *tables*, adapted for the celebration of the Holy Communion in the way used by our Lord himself and his apostles.

* Morton, The Lord's Supper, 2nd ed. book 6, c. 3, § 8, pp. 416—18.

It is quite clear, then, that according to the rubric and eighty-second canon of our church, expounded, as they ought to be, by the authorities above mentioned, royal injunctions, archiepiscopal visitation inquiries, synodal canons, and the declarations of our greatest divines, the only thing which properly answers the description of that article of church furniture, which is to be used for the administration of the Holy Communion, is *a table of joiner's work, standing on a frame*, and unattached to any part of the church, the floor of the chancel being paved underneath where it stands, and the wall at the back of it finished uniformly with the remainder, so as to present no unsightly appearance on its removal. This alone answers the description of what is required by our church; and it is truly painful to contemplate the *art and chicanery* practised by parties *whose views and purposes are well known to many*, though, alas, apparently not to *all*, to introduce stone altars, and yet evade the operation of the law, and frustrate the manifest intentions of the church, by some little device, such as omitting to put cement between the altar and the brickwork or other foundation on which it stands, and between it and the wall, and then, when legally questioned upon the subject, calling them *communion tables*.

To use the words of *the founders of our reformed ecclesiastical polity*, which they addressed to Queen Elizabeth, when earnestly calling her attention to *this very point*,—to erect an altar in the face of the directions given in the Prayer Book as to a communion table, is to “*break ecclesiastical laws established by parliament*.” And this infraction comes at the very moment when, of all others since the Reformation, except possibly Archbishop Laud's time, it is calculated to do the greatest amount of injury to the interests of our church, and the cause of protestant and catholic truth.

A few years since hardly an altar (comparatively speaking) was to be found. Now, alas, especially in our new churches, they abound.

May we not humbly ask, then, Is it well, that at a time when peculiar care is required to uphold the interests of Protestant truth, and the Protestant character of our church, in the minds of the people, at that very moment the sanction of our ecclesiastical authorities should be given (for this is a matter entirely within the power of the diocesan, as Bishop Ridley has pointed out)* to an illegal approximation to Rome in one of her worst corruptions of the Christian faith? It is impossible to view without pain the advantage thus given to those ecclesiastical agitators among us who have destroyed our peace, and are by these practices undermining the very foundations on which our church stands.

London, May 6th, 1844.

* See p. 36, above.

LONDON

PRINTED BY G. J. PALMER, 81 VOY STREET, STRAND.

Lately Published, price 5s. cloth.

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